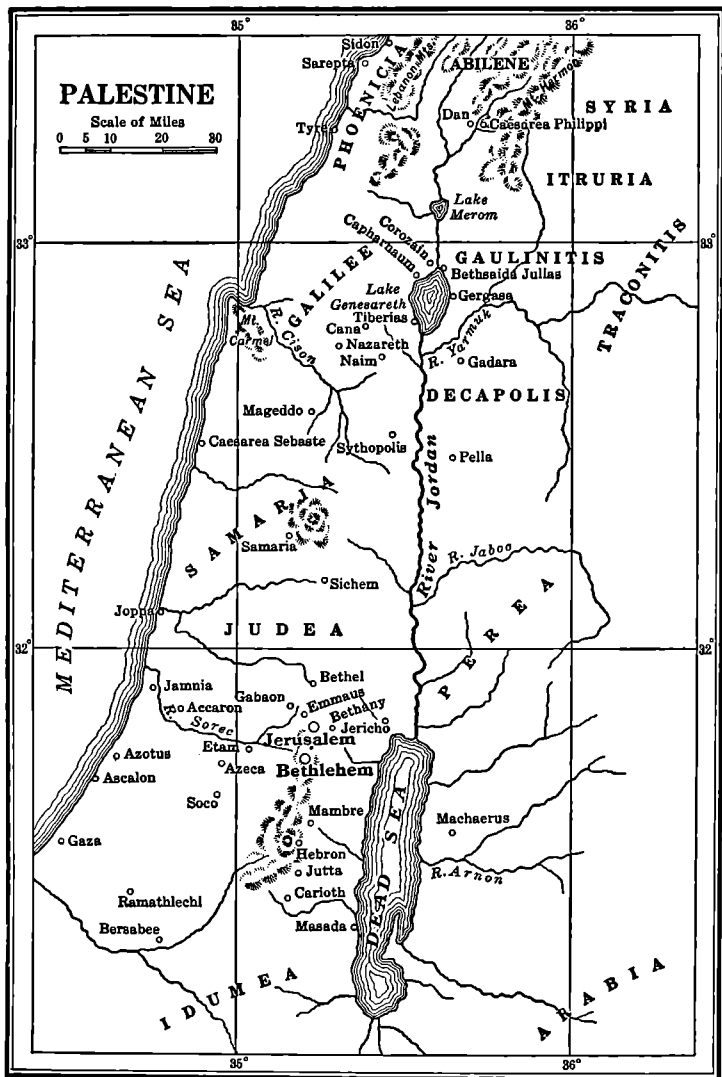






*THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO  
ST. LUKE*





THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO  
ST. LUKE

A STUDY OF THE THIRD GOSPEL WITH A  
TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

BY THE  
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## PREFACE

Pope Leo XIII, in the "Providentissimus Deus," points out motives for the study and use of the Sacred Scriptures. Their use in preaching and instructing is urged and recommended by the words and example of Jesus Christ, the Apostles and the Fathers. Those whose duty it is to instruct others will find nowhere else more ample matter or more abundant exhortation. In the Scriptures will be found consolation in trouble, encouragement to virtue, attraction to the love of God, convincing arguments for faith and morals, strong exhortations and splendid examples of every virtue. St. Jerome, the Patron of Scriptural Studies, has given the advice which still holds good: "Study that which thou thyself must preach. . . . Let the speech of the priest be ever seasoned with Scriptural reading" (*De Vita Cler. ad Nepot.*). The Gospels place before us the Person of Jesus, His example, words and works; and their use gives to doctrine and exhortation an efficacy, persuasiveness and authority which attracts and moves as no other form of argumentation can.

The object of the present work on St. Luke's Gospel is intended as an aid to the student and the preacher of the Word of God in understanding and in making practical use of the content of the Gospel. In order to accomplish this end, the Commentary does not consist in word-definitions and detached notes to the single verses. It is divided into topics, each division having its proper heading as suggested by the Gospel itself. Under the headings are given parallels in the other Gospels; and the major differences or real difficulties which may be found in a comparison of the accounts

are briefly noted and treated. It would be well for the student to acquaint himself with these parallels before proceeding to the explanation of the text. The Commentary itself is a continuous and connected exposition of the Gospel in so far as this is possible without overlooking important points of the text. Lengthy discussions, curious questions and irrelevant digressions are avoided and attention focused upon the text and context of the Gospel and the sequence of thought in the various narratives. The doctrinal and ethical import of the text is pointed out; and this, together with the comprehensive view of the entire narrative, will aid in the use and application of the text. Some particular attention is given to the interpretation and application of the Parables, those wonderful illustrations of supernatural truths which are so often misunderstood and mis-applied. In this matter, Voste says: "*Si decursu saeculorum nullo alio litterario genere, in Bibliis contento, magis abusi sunt quam parabolico, ratio est quia de facto parabolas considerarunt ceu allegorias, illasquas allegorice sunt interpretati, omnia verba, minima descripta facta antitypo accommodando. Hinc infinitae parabolarum interpretationes. Hinc varietas et contradiction perpetua opinionum. Nullus est exegeta, qui hoc gemens non sit expertus*" (*De Natura et Interpretatione Parabolarum*, p. 58). ✓ No better examples and illustrations for explaining the supernatural can be found than the similes and Parables, if rightly understood and applied.

The necessity and utility of recurring to the original language of the Gospel has not been overlooked. In order that the Commentary might not be overburdened with references to passages where the ordinary English versions are not in harmony with the original text and that the flow of the narrative might not be too frequently impeded with critical annotations a Translation of the Gospel from the Greek is provided. The translation is not a complete departure from the familiar Douay Version. The phraseology of the Douay has

been followed when convenient and certain doubtful "readings" have been retained in parenthesis. The readings thus marked, on the authority of the Greek MSS., are found in: v, 38; viii, 45; ix, 55; xvii, 9, 35; xxiii, 17, 38; xxiv, 36, 42. The genuinity of xxii, 43-44 is treated in the Introduction, section 2. For texts, the student is referred to Hetzenauer's edition of the Latin Vulgate (Pustet) and to Vogel's edition of the Greek New Testament (Duesseldorf). For a discussion of the variant Greek readings, recourse may be had to the Commentaries of Knabenbauer, Breen and Plummer.



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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. *Saint Luke*

The name Luke, Λουκάς, is probably an abbreviation from Λουκάνας. In several of the most ancient Latin MSS. the Third Gospel is inscribed *secundum Lucanum*. Schulze (Graeca Latin. 12) and Deissmann (Light from the ancient East, 434 f) consider the name as equivalent to and interchangeable with *Lucius*. The identification of St. Luke with Lucius of Cyprus (Ac. xiii, 1) is possible, but highly improbable; his identification with Lucius who sends greetings to Rome (Rom. xvi, 21) is impossible, because this Lucius was a kinsman of St. Paul and a Jew (cf. Poelzl, Die Mitarbeiter des Weltapostels, 92-95, 171-172).

St. Luke was a native of Antioch. This is certain according to early and unanimous tradition, expressed by St. Jerome (De Vir. Ill. 7), by Eusebius (H. E., 3, 4), and ancient Prologue to the Gospel (cf. Wordsworth, Nov. Testamentum, I, 269), and the gloss. to Ac. ix, 28 in Codex D (cf. Holzmeister, Summa Introductionis, no. 22 and 105). He was not a Jew by birth. This is borne out by the tradition that he was a Syrian, born at Antioch. The same is stated by St. Paul, who distinguishes him from "those of the circumcision" (Col. iv, 10-14). Whether he was a Jewish proselyte before his conversion to Christianity is uncertain. His knowledge of Jewish affairs and use of Hebraisms would not prove that he was. Since St. Luke was a Gentile by birth, he was not one of the disciples of the Lord, as some have surmised. In the Prologue to his Gospel he separates himself from those who were eyewitnesses to the life of

Christ and places himself with those who have received the knowledge of Him from others. By profession, he was a physician (Col. iv, 14).

St. Luke was a fellow-laborer and companion of St. Paul (Phi. 24; II Tim. iv, 11). These two Epistles make known that he was with St. Paul during his first Roman imprisonment when Philemon was written, and also during the second imprisonment when II Timothy was written. From the "we" sections of the Acts of the Apostles, i.e., those sections in which St. Luke uses the first person plural, we are acquainted with some of his activities. The first of these sections (xvi, 10-17) makes known that he accompanied St. Paul on the second missionary journey from Troas to Philippi (A.D. 50-51). The second (xx, 5-xxi, 18) shows that he was at Philippi during the third missionary journey and accompanied St. Paul from that city to Jerusalem (A.D. 58). It is probable that he had remained in Macedonia during several years. The third "we" section (xxvii, 1-xxviii, 16) relates the voyage of St. Paul to Rome as a prisoner. St. Luke remained with him during the two years' imprisonment (A.D. 61-63) and was with him again during the second (A.D. 67).

Very little is known of the later life and work of St. Luke. The earlier writers state nothing beyond that which is contained in the Scriptures, or inferred from it. Later writers state that he preached in Bithynia and Macedonia (St. Epiphanius); that he died a martyr's death (St. Gregory Naz.); that his remains were brought to Constantinople (St. Jerome).

## *2. Genuinity and Integrity of the Gospel*

Genuinity, or authenticity, regards the origin of a book. A book is called "genuine" when it *de facto* was written by the one to whom it is ascribed. The Third Gospel is ascribed



to St. Luke; its genuinity means, therefore, that St. Luke wrote this Gospel. The fact that this particular author wrote this particular book is an historical fact; and, as such, the authorship can and must be proven by historical arguments. These arguments are of two kinds, internal and external. The former are taken from the book itself, and their chief positive value consists in confirming the external arguments and showing that this book is the one to which these bear witness. The primary arguments are external, for they are historical. These consist in the testimony of competent witnesses as to the existence and origin of a book. The external arguments for the genuinity of a Book of the Bible will consist in explicit statements of ancient writers, use of the Book, and its citation as part of Sacred Scripture.

The general argument for the genuinity of St. Luke's Gospel is thus stated by the Biblical Commission, June 16, 1912: "The clear evidence of tradition, wonderfully harmonious from the earliest ages of the Church and supported by numerous arguments, viz., by the explicit testimonies of the Fathers and ecclesiastical writers, by the citations and allusions occurring in their works, by the usage of the ancient heretics, by the versions of the Books of the New Testament in the most ancient and almost universal manuscript codices, and also by intrinsic arguments from the text . . . certainly compels us to affirm that . . . Luke, a physician, the assistant and companion of Paul" is the author of the Third Gospel. We will take up the single parts of this argument, confining ourselves to the first centuries.

St. Irenaeus, who represents the traditions of Asia Minor and Gaul in the second half of the second century, quotes the Gospel very frequently and ascribes it to St. Luke (cf. *Adv. Haer.* III, i, 2). He treats the authorship as certain and undeniable, and as universally accepted. In the same manner speaks Tertullian (A.D. 190-220), a witness of the African Church, who appeals to the teaching of those who

preceded him. He frequently quotes the Gospel and definitely ascribes it to St. Luke (*Adv. Marc.* 4, 2, etc.). Of the same period is Clement of Alexandria who, after prolonged journeys in Greece, Egypt and Syria, settled at Alexandria and became the head of the school founded by St. Pantænus. He studied the tradition of the various churches and points to these traditions handed down from the Apostles (*Stromata*, I, 1). He quotes the Gospel as the work of St. Luke (*Strom.* I, 21). The faith of the Roman Church is expressed in the second century Muratorian Fragment, which contains a brief notice of the life of St. Luke and the Gospel written by him. These four witnesses, belonging to different Churches, represent Asia Minor, Gaul, Rome, Egypt and Africa. From their testimony it is evident that the Third Gospel was universally accepted as the work of St. Luke. Such a universal persuasion, without a shadow of doubt, can not arise simultaneously and over night; it must be founded on previous teaching and historical records. And, in fact, St. Irenæus, Tertullian and Clement give, as the reason for this persuasion, the teaching of those who preceded them, a teaching which will reach back to the first century.

Allusions to St. Luke's Gospel and quotations from it in the early part of the second century and the latter part of the first show that the Gospel was then in existence and received as part of the inspired Scriptures. The first of these quotations occurs in St. Paul's first Epistle to Timothy, v, 18, where he quotes Lk. x, 7. St. Clement of Rome (d. A.D. 98) makes allusion to St. Luke's Gospel (*ad Cor.* xiii, 2) as does St. Polycarp (A.D. 69-155), who quotes Lk. vi, 36-38 (*Phil.* ii). The *Didache*, of the first century, shows an acquaintance with the Gospel (cf. 4, 8; 16, 1; etc.). St. Justin Martyr (A.D. 150) quotes from books which he calls the "Memoirs of the Apostles," i.e., the Gospels; and among his quotations are such texts and facts as are contained only

in St. Luke (v.g., I Apol. 33, 34; c. Tryph. 78; 100; 103; 105). That Tatian, St. Justin's pupil, knew of and accepted the Gospel is proven by the fact that he included it in the Diatessaron. The Epistles of the Church of Lyons (cf. Eus., H. E. 5, 1) and Ps. Clement in 2 Cor. viii, also show an acquaintance with the Gospel.

A not unimportant part of the historical argument from tradition is the usage of the Gospel by ancient heretics and pagans. St. Luke's Gospel was used by Celsus (cf. Origin, con. Cels. 51, 320); by Basilides and Valentinus (cf. Tertullian, de Praescr. 38; St. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. III, 14; Clement Alex., Strom. 4, 12); by Heracleon (cf. Strom. 4, 9); and by Marcion (cf. St. Irenaeus, op. cit. I, 27; Tertullian, c. Marc. 4, 2). The value of this usage in establishing the genuinity of St. Luke's Gospel is thus stated by St. Irenaeus: "So great is the certainty (of the Gospels) that the heretics themselves testify to them; and each endeavors to establish his doctrine by means of these writings. If then our foes testify for us and utilize (the Gospels), the proof that we draw therefrom is solid and true" (Adv. Haer. III, 11, 8).

The Gospel is contained under the name of St. Luke in the Old Latin and Syriac versions of the second century, in all Greek Codices and Canons of the New Testament.

Thus does history establish that, unanimously and from a very early period, both friends and foes accepted the Third Gospel as a part of the inspired Scriptures and as the work of St. Luke. This traditional testimony, dating back to the first century, was never once questioned by the most hostile critics; and it rests not on mere conjectures but upon undeniable facts. To deny the genuinity of the Gospel would be to destroy the evidence of history.

Internal arguments, taken from the Gospel itself, confirm the testimony of tradition. Three facts stand out prominently in regard to St. Luke. He was of Gentile origin,

a physician, and a companion of St. Paul. The Third Gospel furnishes many indications that it was written by such a man. In the first place, the Gospel is freer from Hebraisms than the other Gospels and is written in purer and more polished Greek. The author's mastery of Greek is shown by the elegant introductions to both the Gospel and the Acts; by the freedom of his constructions, even where Hebraisms occur; and by the richness of his vocabulary. The occurrence of Hebraisms in the writings of a Gentile is accounted for by the fact that he used the Septuagint version of the Old Testament; by the use of Aramaic sources; and by his long association with Jewish converts. Secondly, the author of the Third Gospel uses terms found only in the medical works of Hippocrates, Dioscorides, Arctaeus and Galen (cf. Hobart, *Medical Language of St. Luke*; Harnack, *Lukas der Arzt*). Examples of medical terms (Greek text) will be found in iv, 34; iv, 38; v, 18; viii, 44; x, 30; xvi, 20-25; etc. Thirdly, the author was one acquainted with St. Paul and instructed by him. The theme of the Gospel is Pauline, contained in Rom. i, 15 f. The ideas of faith, grace, justice, salvation, contained in the Third Gospel are also Pauline. A greater similarity exists between the Third Gospel and the Epistles of St. Paul in vocabulary, phraseology than between any other two writers of the New Testament.

Closely connected with the question of genuinity, and a part of it, is the question of integrity. This second question is concerned with the Gospel text as we now have it. Having proven that St. Luke wrote the Gospel, it may be asked whether he wrote the entire Gospel as now contained in the Bible. Modern critics have called into question especially the first two chapters and verses 43 and 44 of chapter xxii.

The only arguments advanced by them to "prove" that St. Luke did not write the first two chapters of the Gospel

are: Marcion did not receive them; they contain many Hebraisms; they contain supernatural facts, especially the Virgin Birth. This last argument is uncritical, a priori, and of no value in an historical question. And the same may be said of Marcion. His authority is nil, for his own contemporaries condemn him as a mutilator of the Gospel, and the very fact that he endeavored to remove these two chapters for personal reason gives proof that they were received as part of the Gospel before his time. The Hebraisms of these chapters occur especially in the hymns and canticles, which St. Luke translated literally from the Aramaic, retaining the Aramaic coloring and adding to their strength and beauty. The genuinity of these two chapters is proven by the unanimous voice of the ancient Church, for: (a) They are found in all Codices and versions, as part of the Gospel; (b) They were known and proclaimed as part of inspired Scripture by the Muratorian Fragment, St. Justin, St. Irenaeus, the Church of Lyons, Tertullian, to say nothing of later testimonies; (c) They were called into doubt by no one in the early Church, except by Marcion, who certainly is without authority; (d) The language of these chapters is the language of the rest of the Gospel. There are neither external nor internal arguments against the genuinity of the first two chapters of the Gospel; their genuinity rests upon as solid a foundation as the rest of the Gospel.

Against the genuinity of xxii, 43-44 the following is advanced: (a) These verses are wanting in four Greek Codices, A, B, R, T; and are marked with asterisks or obeli in some Greek texts; (b) They are not contained in a few MSS. of the Syrian and Coptic versions; (c) St. Ambrose and St. Cyril of Alexandria omit them in their Homilies on the Gospel; (d) Sts. Hilary and Jerome say that they are wanting in certain codices. However, the arguments in favor of the genuinity of these two verses far out-



weigh the contrary arguments. Their genuinity is established by the following: (a) All Greek Codices, except those mentioned above, contain the verses; (b) They are also contained in all MSS. of the Latin, and in some of the Syriac and most of the Coptic versions; (c) They were used, as part of the Gospel, by Sts. Justin, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Dionysius, Chrysostom, Ephraem, etc., i.e., by early Christian writers from all parts of the Christian world; (d) Though Sts. Hilary and Jerome knew that they were wanting in some codices, they used them as parts of the inspired Scriptures. The omission from certain texts and marking with an asterisk in others may be accounted for by lectionary usage or, as St. Ephipanius says, as due to fear and a lack of understanding the power and purpose of the verses (Ancor. 31).

### *3. Time and Place of Composition*

The most ancient and constant tradition, expressed in the writings of the Fathers and the order of the Books in the New Testament Codices and Canons, testifies that St. Luke was the third of the Evangelists to write.

As to the absolute date of composition, it must be placed before the year 70. This proposition is stated against those who declare that the Prophecy concerning the Destruction of Jerusalem could not have taken place till after the event (for they deny the possibility of Prophecy). But Prophecy is possible. If St. Luke and the other Gospel writers had composed this Prophecy after the Destruction of Jerusalem, they would have distinguished more clearly those things that referred to the year 70 and to Jerusalem. Furthermore, in the Gospel and in the Acts, St. Luke notes that certain prophecies were fulfilled. Had he written the Gospel after the year 70, he would certainly have noted the fulfillment of this Prophecy. His Gospel describes places and institutions

as they were before the Destruction of Jerusalem, without any indication that a change had taken place.

Of greater weight is the fact that the Gospel was written before the Acts of the Apostles. That this was the order in which St. Luke wrote the two Books, is an admitted fact. But the Acts were written not later than the year 63, towards the end of St. Paul's first Roman imprisonment. The latter part of the Acts, from xxi, 27 to the end, recounts the various stages in the criminal process against St. Paul: the arrest, the accusations, the examinations before Felix and Festus, the imprisonment in Caesarea, the appeal to Caesar, the voyage to Rome, the imprisonment there. Here the Acts end, without stating the outcome of the appeal to Caesar. Critics, who deny the early writing of Acts in order to deny the earlier composition of the Gospel, create what they call "the mystery of the Acts"; but there is no mystery. The ending of the Acts show that they were written before the cause of St. Paul had been examined by Caesar; therefore, in the year 63. And since the Gospel was written before Acts, the date of its composition must be prior to A.D. 63.

The Gospel was not written before the year 58. St. Luke was a companion of St. Paul a long time and interviewed the immediate witnesses before writing the Gospel. He was not a companion of St. Paul before the year 50. He could not have written the Gospel during the years he spent in Macedonia, or during the time he accompanied St. Paul on the missions. In the year 58 he returned with St. Paul to Jerusalem and remained with him during the two years spent in Caesarea. It was during this time, A.D. 58 to 63, that he wrote the Gospel, either at Caesarea or at Rome.

The appearance of the many "narrations," mentioned in the Prologue of the Gospel, does not argue for a later date; for very little is known of these "narrations" and 28 years is sufficient time for their composition. Neither is the fact

St. Luke refers to Jesus as "the Lord" a valid argument; for this is the terminology of St. Paul, with which St. Luke was acquainted at this date.

#### *4. Purpose and Characteristics of the Gospel*

In the Prologue to the Gospel St. Luke states that he is writing a history of the life and teaching of Christ, from His Nativity to His Ascension into Heaven. He writes in order that his readers may have certitude in regard to those things in which they were instructed. He desires to recall to their minds the doctrines they have been taught and to confirm these doctrines through the testimony of eyewitnesses to the Gospel facts. It was his aim to show all Christians, and especially the converts from Paganism, on how firm a basis of fact their faith was founded.

The character of the Gospel shows that it was written for those Christian communities which were founded by St. Paul. In these communities there were converts both from Judaism and Paganism. Among the indications that St. Luke had the Gentiles in mind are: (a) The substitution of Greek for Hebrew names (v.g., vi, 15; vii, 30; xxiii, 33); (b) The few quotations from the Old Testament, in comparison with the other Gospels; (c) The demonstration that Jesus came to save all, the Gentiles as well as the Jews (v.g., vi, 25-27; ix, 52-56; x, 30-37; xiv, 16-24). On the other hand, there are indications that he wrote for Jewish converts also: (a) The first two chapters are filled with allusions to the Old Law and recount the privileges of Israel (v.g., i, 16 f., 30 f., 54, 68; ii, 10); (b) The Old Law is held in honor (v.g., xvi, 17; xvi, 29; xiii, 16); (c) The mercy of Jesus towards the Jews is recorded (v.g., xix, 41; xxiii, 28; xxiii, 34).

In the epistles of St. Paul to the Churches we find a constant insistence on the universality of Messianic Salvation. Without doubt he insisted, in his instruction, upon the thesis

expressed in Rom. i, 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel. For it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and to the Greek." What St. Paul here states as his thesis, and explains and proves in a theoretical way, that St. Luke shows forth in a practical and historical manner. Taking this thesis of St. Paul, he unites the thesis of Matthew: Jesus is the Promised Messiah; with the thesis of Mark: Jesus is the Son of God. This is already shown in the account of the Infancy of Jesus. From this account the Jew could and should recognize the Messiah in Jesus, the Son of David, born of a Virgin, in the City of David, acknowledged by Simeon and Anna; and from the same chapters the Gentile could and should recognize the Son of God in Jesus, glorified by so many miracles at His very entrance into the world and proclaimed as the Savior of Mankind. Throughout the Gospel Jesus is shown as offering forgiveness and salvation to all: to the Jew (v.g., i, 33; i, 54; ii, 10; xiii, 34); to the Samaritans (ix, 51-56; x, 30-37; xvii, 11-19); to the Gentile (v.g., ii, 32; vii, 9; x, 1; xiii, 29; xxi, 24); to publicans and sinners (iii, 12-13; vii, 27-32; xiv, 1-2; xviii, 9-14; xix, 2-10; etc.). So much does St. Luke insist on the Mercy of Jesus that his Gospel has been called the Gospel of Mercy; and Dante (*De Monarch.* i, 16) styles him "*Scriba mansuetudinis Christi.*" An important detail in the universality of the Gospel is that it is in a special sense the Gospel for woman. All through the Gospel they are allowed a prominent place, and many types of womanhood are placed before the reader: The Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Elizabeth, Anna the widow, the sinner in the house of Simon, Mary and Martha, the Ministering Women, Mary Magdalen.

More than any other Gospel, St. Luke's brings before its readers the subject of prayer. The Gospel opens and closes with worship in the temple (i, 9; xxiv, 53). More often than the others does he bring forth the example of Jesus praying

(iii, 21; v, 16; vi, 12; ix, 18, 29; xi, 1; xxii, 32; xxiii, 34, 36). He alone records the Parables that illustrate prayer: The Friend at Midnight (xi, 1-13), the Unjust Judge (xvii, 1-8), the Pharisee and the Publican (xviii, 11-13). Together with the example and instruction of Jesus, he adds many other examples of prayer and thanksgiving. He alone records the three Canticles that have become a part of the daily prayers of the Church: The Magnificat (i, 46-55), the Benedictus (i, 68-79), the Nunc Dimittis (ii, 29-32).

St. Luke's is the most literary of the Gospels. "The sixth century was not far from the truth when it called him a painter, and said that he had painted the portrait of the Virgin. There is no picture of her so complete as his" (Plummer). With a few strokes of the pen he presents a lifelike sketch of the characters of the Gospel, v.g., Zachary and Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna, Mary and Martha, the Widow of Naim, Herod Antipas, Joseph of Arimathea. To him we owe the beautiful and exquisite narratives of the Annunciation, Visitation, Birth of Jesus, Presentation in the Temple, Jesus among the Doctors, the sinner at the feet of Jesus, the conversion of Zacheus, the disciples on the way to Emmaus, etc. The finest and most descriptive of our Lord's parables are preserved in his Gospel, v.g., the Good Samaritan, the Watchful Servants, the Prodigal Son, the Great Supper, the rich man and Lazarus, the Pharisee and Publican. A feature not to be overlooked, on the literary side of the Gospel, is the antithesis, so often drawn, v.g., between the doubt of Zachary and the faith of Mary, between the Pharisee and the Publican, between the murmuring of the Pharisees and the rejoicing of the Angels, between the thankless Jew and the grateful Samaritan, between the good thief and the bad, between Christ and Satan, the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. The Gospel presents a combination of descriptive power with simplicity and dignity, of truthfulness with effectiveness of narration, of contrasts and har-



monies, of lights and shadows. It is by turns joyous and sad; but even where it is most tragic, it is always serene.

Another feature that should be noted is that St. Luke's Gospel is especially an historical document. This he states in the Prologue to the Gospel; and to accomplish his purpose, he made a careful and diligent study of the Gospel history. His authority is of the first class, eyewitnesses and participants in the facts he narrates. Having gathered together his material, it is also his purpose to arrange the narrative in historical sequence; he writes "in order" as he himself says. He alone connects the Gospel history with the history of Syria and Rome; the designation of the year and month occurs more often in his writings than in the rest of the New Testament; he very often designates what incidents are connected together. St. Luke is an historian of the highest order. Since the rise of the Liberal and Rationalistic Schools, untiring efforts have been made to discredit him as an historian. Every date and mention of historical events, taken from profane history, has been subjected to closest scrutiny and severest criticism; demands have been made upon him which are not made upon other historians. But St. Luke has successfully withstood all these adverse efforts; yea more, the very study and research, taken up to discredit him, has served to vindicate and establish his historical accuracy (if such confirmation indeed be required for an inspired author).

### *5. Division of the Gospel*

Besides the Prologue (i, 1-4), the Gospel may be divided into six parts.

I. The Hidden Life (i, 5-ii, 52). The accounts of the birth and early youth of St. John and of Jesus, contained in this section, are proper to St. Luke's Gospel.

II. Introduction to the Public Life (iii, 1-iv, 13), con-

taining an account of the Mission of St. John, the Baptism of Jesus and His Fast and Temptation.

III. The Galilean Ministry (iv, 14-xix, 50), containing an account of the miracles and preaching of Jesus in Galilee. This section may be divided into three parts: (a) From the Baptism to the Second Pasch (iv, 14-v, 39); (b) From the Second to the Third Pasch (vi, 1-ix, 10); (c) From the Third Pasch to the departure of Jesus from Galilee (ix, 11-ix, 50).

IV. The Ministry outside of Galilee (ix, 51-xix, 27), also called the Perean Ministry, because the events are recorded as having taken place after Jesus left Galilee and before He entered Jerusalem for the fourth Pasch. This section is made up mostly of parables and discourses of Jesus, who is repeatedly said to be on the way to Jerusalem. The greater part of this section is proper to St. Luke.

V. The Ministry in Jerusalem (xix, 28-xxi, 38), containing an account of the events from the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem to the Last Supper.

VI. The Passion and Glory of Jesus (xxii, 1-xxiv, 53). In this section is the account of the treachery of Judas, the Last Supper, the Passion and Death of Jesus (xxii, 1-xxiii, 56); the Resurrection, Manifestations and Ascension of Jesus (xxiv, 1-53).

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

## *Chapter I*

(1) Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a narration of the things that have been accomplished among us, (2) according as they delivered them unto us who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and minis-

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### *The Prologue. I, 1-4*

The first four verses of St. Luke's Gospel form an introduction to his book, very much according to the Hellenistic style and form of the times. In this introduction which is characterized by its modesty, simplicity and brevity, he states the content matter of the book (v. 1), the sources whence he drew the facts recorded (v. 2), the purpose of the book, together with a dedication (3-4).

According to the view which St. Luke the historian takes of the history of Christianity, one period closed and a new began with the Ascension of Christ into Heaven. With this event he closes the Gospel, and with the same event he begins the Acts of the Apostles. The life, teachings, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus, form the subject matter of the Gospel; to these events he refers as *the things that have been accomplished among us*, i.e., have taken place in our own times. The mention of the many who had undertaken to write a narrative of these events shows that there were well known descriptions of the life of Christ, in whole or in part, at a very early time. St. Luke casts no blame and passes no censure upon the efforts of his predecessors; *Have taken into hand*, ἐπιχειρέω, merely states that they had undertaken a

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ters of the word; (3) it seemed good to me also, having diligently inquired into all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, (4) that thou mayest know the certainty of those things in which thou hast been instructed.

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certain work, without indicating either success or failure on their part. The identity of these works and their authors is unknown to us. Certain it is that they are not the so-called Apocryphal Gospels, for these works are of later date. The Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark may be among the works indicated, since it is fairly certain that St. Luke knew these two Gospels, and made use of St. Mark's. St. Luke does not expressly state that he made use of these narrations; but neither is their use by him excluded.

St. Luke was not an eyewitness of the events which he narrates, for in verse 2 he places himself among those who received their knowledge of Christ from others. Yet, he has first-class testimony to the truth of the matters he narrates. His sources of knowledge are those whom he styles *eyewitnesses and ministers of the word*. These are the Apostles and their co-laborers, contemporaries of Christ, who bore witness to what they had seen and heard, and gave testimony of their personal experiences. For St. Luke these witnesses were especially the Mother of Jesus (as indicated in the first chapters); Sts. Peter, James and John, whom he met while a companion of St. Paul; the disciples and first preachers of Christianity in his native Antioch. Interviewing these witnesses, he made a most careful and diligent research into the life and teachings of Jesus. His qualifications as an historian are: careful study, research, gathering testimony from those who took part in the events narrated.

His aim is two-fold. First he intends to write *in order*, καθεξῆς, i.e., to give his account in chronological sequence. This purpose is plainly visible in the Gospel (cf. Introduc-

tion, section 4). His second purpose was to show forth the historical foundation for the truth of Christianity; *that thou mayest know the certainty of those things in which thou art instructed*. The Gospel is addressed, or dedicated, to one Theophilus. Both from the title given him, *Most Excellent*, and from the fact that the Gospel is addressed to him, he seems to have been a man of some distinction. The purpose of the dedication was to assure a wider circulation of the Book. Theophilus had been instructed in the truths of Christianity. St. Luke intends, by an historic-pragmatic Gospel, to give him and all who became acquainted with the Book, an undeniable proof that those things in which they were instructed were true and worthy of credence. With this purpose, compare that of St. John: "These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life in his name" (Jo. xx, 31). The Gospel is not mere history, it is a religious work intended to excite and confirm faith. For the other purpose, not expressed in the Prologue, see Introduction.

*Birth of John Announced. I, 5-25*

**THE TIME.** The usual mode of fixing the dates of historical events in ancient times was to mention the reigning sovereign. Following this custom, St. Luke designates the time when the Gospel history began; it was during the reign of Herod, King of Judea. Herod was an Idumean by birth and, though the Idumeans had embraced Judaism, he was considered as a foreigner. A quarrel between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, in 64 B.C., led to Roman intervention in Palestine. The family of Herod rose to prominence and he received supreme command in Palestine, 37 B.C. The Roman Senate conferred upon him the title "King of Judea"; and under this title he ruled over all Palestine: Judea, Samaria, Galilee and Perea. Posterity bestowed upon him the title

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(5) There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zachary, of the course of Abia; and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was

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of "The Great" because of his courage, good fortune and works of construction. The most notable of these works was the rebuilding of the Temple.

There are four Herods mentioned in the New Testament: (1) Herod the Great, mentioned here, who was King when Christ was born. (2) Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, tetrarch of Galilee from his father's death till 39 A.D. He lived in adulterous union with his brother's wife, put St. John to death and mocked the Savior during the Passion. (3) Herod Agrippa I, nephew of Herod Antipas and grandson of Herod the Great, king of all Palestine and Abilene from 41 to 44 A.D. He is the Herod who raised persecution against the Church, had St. James beheaded and St. Peter cast into prison. (4) Herod Agrippa II, son of the preceding, king of Chalcis, Abilene and portions of Galilee, Perea and Batanea. Before him St. Paul preached and defended himself against the accusations of the Jews. Two Philips, mentioned in the New Testament and often given the name "Herod" are: Philip the Elder, son of Herod the Great, and first husband of Herodias who divorced him that she might marry his brother; Philip the Younger, tetrarch of Itruria from his father's death till 34 A.D.

PARENTS OF ST. JOHN (5-7). Before entering upon the narrative proper, St. Luke introduces us to the parents of St. John, describing their office, dignity and character.

Zachary, the father of St. John was *a certain priest*. From this general designation of his office and from the later narrative it is evident that Zachary was not a High Priest. David divided the priests into 24 courses or classes to alternate in the Temple service, each course being on duty one week at a time. Of these courses, that of Abia was the eighth (I Par. xxiv, 7-18). And though but four of the

Elizabeth. (6) And they were both just before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, without blame. (7) And they had no child, because that Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well advanced in years.

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courses returned from the Babylonian Captivity, they were again divided into 24 courses and given the names of the original classes. This division of the priests and order of service continued down to the destruction of the Temple. *Of the course of Abia* means that Zachary belonged to the division or class that bore the name of Abia. The mother of St. John was Elizabeth, *of the daughters of Aaron*, i.e., she was a descendant of Aaron.

Having praised the parents of St. John because of their office and ancestry, St. Luke describes their character. Both were distinguished for their virtue. When they are called *just*, reference is not made to one particular virtue; but, according to the usage of Sacred Scripture, the term refers to virtue and holiness in general. And this was not mere apparent holiness, for they were just *before God*, i.e., in the sight of God; they possessed true, internal virtue, such as has the approval of God. Their virtue showed itself in their conduct, for they lived according to the Law of God, fulfilling all their religious duties and obligation. Thus they were without blame, free from any serious moral stain, in the sight of God and man.

One sorrow overshadowed their lives; they were childless. Elizabeth suffered under a defect of nature which rendered her incapable of bearing children. And now they were both well advanced in years, at an age when there was no longer any hope or natural expectancy of offspring. To be childless was considered as a great misfortune by all Oriental peoples and especially by the Jews. The latter looked upon it as a stain, and often as a punishment for sin. Such an idea has

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(8) And it came to pass that, while he was officiating as a priest in the order of his course before God, (9) according to the custom of the priest's office, it was his lot to offer incense, having gone into the sanctuary of the Lord. (10) And the whole multitude of the people was praying without at the hour of incense.

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been excluded in regard to Zachary and Elizabeth by the description of the character, given in these verses.

VISION OF ZACHARY (8-17). In the designs of Providence, men's minds were to be attracted to John by the miracle of his birth. An angel is sent to make known to Zachary that the natural impediment to child-bearing shall be removed from Elizabeth, and that she was to bear a son who should be the Precursor of the Messiah. The vision took place when Zachary was on active service in the Temple with the other members of his course. As the priests of each course took up their week of service, it was customary to cast lots for the performance of the various functions. One day the lot fell upon Zachary to offer the incense. This ceremony, considered as a most solemn act of worship, took place after the morning and evening sacrifice. After the sacrifice, the priest chosen entered into the Holy Place, or Sanctuary, bearing a golden censer, and spread incense upon the burning coals prepared at the Altar of Incense. The smoke arising from the burning incense represented the prayers of Israel and recommended them to God, to whom they should ascend as a pleasing offering: "Let my prayer be directed as incense in they sight" (Ps. cxl, 2).

When it is said that the priest enters the temple for this service, the Temple proper, or the Sanctuary, is meant. Under the term "Temple" in our English versions is designated both the Sanctuary and the entire area and courts of the Temple. For the former the Greek texts use *ναός*, which we have translated "sanctuary"; and for the latter *ιερόν*, which is translated "temple." As rebuilt by Herod the Great, the



(11) And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. (12) And Zachary seeing him, was troubled and fear fell upon him. (13) But the angel said to him: Fear not, Zachary, for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. (14) And thou

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Temple occupied an area some 600 feet square. The outermost part of the Temple constituted the Court of the Gentiles, which was a large open court enclosed with magnificent porticos and cloisters. The inner buildings were surrounded by a balustrade, called "the Soreg," beyond which the Gentiles were forbidden to pass. Thence one ascended to the Court of the Women by 15 steps. Another 15 steps led up from this court to the Court of the Priests, in which was the Altar of Holocausts. In the center of this court and on the summit of the mount, was the Temple proper, or Sanctuary, built of purest marble and overlaid with gold. The interior was divided into two parts, separated by a veil: the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Into the latter only the High Priest was permitted to enter once a year, on the Day of Atonement. Zachary entered the Holy Place, the fore-part of the Temple, to offer the incense.

When Zachary entered to perform this ceremony, there appeared to him an angel, most probably in human form, standing at the right side of the altar. The angel appeared in the Holy Place, near the altar and on the right side, because he announced the advent of the true High Priest, the mystery of the universal sacrifice, and the joy of Heaven's gift (St. Bede). Zachary immediately recognized the one before him as a visitor from Heaven; for no one but the officiating priest would have dared to enter the Holy Place at this time. The angel proceeds to allay the fear caused by his presence and delivers the message with which he had been sent from God (13-17).

Admonishing Zachary that he had nothing to fear, the angel assures him that his prayer has been heard. But of what prayer does the angel speak? Since Zachary was then

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shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice in his nativity. (15) For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord; and shall drink no wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from his mother's womb. (16) And many of the children of Israel shall he

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engaged in public priestly function, it seems certain that he was praying for a realization of the hopes of Israel. But since the angel refers almost exclusively to John, the son to be born to Elizabeth, it must be this prayer of which the angel speaks. During many years Zachary and Elizabeth had prayed for the blessing of offspring. As years went on and the impossibility of her bearing children continued, Zachary may have ceased praying for this particular favor. And thus is explained why Zachary doubts when told that his prayer is heard. The angel refers to prayers of the past.

Zachary is commanded to call his son John. God frequently manifested the destiny and office of a man by the name which He commanded to be given. Jesus and St. John received their names before birth, at the command of God; Simon's name was changed to *Kepha* (Peter), to designate his dignity and office as the "Rock," upon which the Church was founded. So also the name given to the son of Zachary. John means "God is gracious." In the birth of St. John God was gracious to his parents; and his birth and mission made known that the time of Grace and Mercy through the Redeemer was at hand. His birth was a source of joy to his parents; and it was also a source of joy to many others, since he was a prophet sent from God and the one whose coming meant the advent of the Messias.

The angel declares the character of John. *He shall be great before the Lord*; he shall be truly great, with a greatness that has the approval of God. Four characteristics are given as comprising the greatness of St. John: Austerity of life (15); Holiness and gifts of God (15); Efficacy of his

preaching (16); His mission as Precursor of the Messiah (17).

*Wine and strong drink* was the general classification of the Old Testament for all fermented and intoxicating beverages. Abstinence from such drinks was considered as a sign of complete dedication to the service of God and of a penitential life. The priests of the Old Law were commanded to abstain from wine during the time of their actual service in the Temple (Lev. x, 9); and abstinence from all intoxicants was one of the works freely taken up by the Nazarites (Num. vi, 2 ff.). St. John was to take up the penitential practices of the Nazarites, not for a time only, but for his entire life.

The Nazarites were not a sect nor a community, nor were they a distinct school of thought. Under the term "Nazarite" is indicated one who had freely taken upon himself the practice of certain works of penance and bound himself thereto by a vow. Hence, they are not to be confounded with the Essenes, who also practiced certain works of penance but rejected the Temple service and formed a separate and definite community and school of thought. There was no connection whatever between St. John and these sectaries.

The sanctity of St. John is to begin *from his mother's womb*. According to the interpretation of the Fathers, in keeping with the text of the Gospel (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ), the soul of St. John was sanctified and he was filled with the graces of the Holy Spirit while still carried in his mother's womb. This and the preceding characteristic refers more directly to his personal life. They fitted him for his office and mission, described in the remaining portion of the angel's message.

In describing the office and mission of John, the angel makes reference to the Prophecy of Malachias iv, 5-6. The first part of his mission was preaching; and the result of his preaching is foretold. He shall convert many to the Lord their God. Later, as we read in the Gospels, great multitudes

convert to the Lord their God. (17) And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers unto the children and the unbelieving to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a prepared people. (18) And Zachary said to the angel: Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years. (19) And the angel answering, said to him: I am Gabriel, who stand before God, and am sent to speak to

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came to him, attracted by his evident sanctity and converted by the power of his preaching. Through him religious fervor was re-awakened among the people; and they never ceased to reverence him (cf. Lk. xx, 3-6).

Furthermore, John is to go before the Lord *in the spirit and power of Elias*. St. John worked no miracles; but he was to exhibit many of the characteristics and virtues of Elias, his moral strength and courage. Among the ancient prophets, there was no more austere figure than Elias: stern, uncompromising, mortified, zealous for the worship of God. So also John, whom God chose for the great work of preparing the people for the Graces of the Redeemer. The reform movement inaugurated by John is to *turn the hearts of the fathers to the children*. The "fathers" are the Patriarchs and Prophets; the "children" their descendants. John will recall the faithless and degenerate to the faith and virtues of their fore-fathers; he will make them such that the fathers need no longer be ashamed of their offspring. He will also turn the incredulous to the *wisdom of the just*, which wisdom consists in the ordering of one's life according to the Law of God. This is the only true wisdom, for it brings man to the attainment of his highest goal and final destiny. And thus, St. John shall make ready the people for the coming of the Messiah.

DOUBT OF ZACHARY (18-20). Zachary does not seem to have followed the exalted thoughts and truths con-

thee and to bring thee these good tidings. (20) And behold, thou shalt be dumb and not able to speak until the day wherein these things shall come to pass, because thou hast not believed my words which shall be fulfilled in their time.

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tained in the message; he attends only to the fact that he and Elizabeth are promised offspring, and this he finds difficult to believe. His question *How shall this be done?* does not imply absolute unbelief; neither does it contain a doubt as to God's power. For many years his prayers had not been heard; and now, he is slow to believe that the prayer is heard and asks for a sign in confirmation of a promise which, according to his own words, is naturally impossible of fulfillment. The angel promises him offspring; he thinks of his and his wife's condition and finds it difficult to believe the word of the angel. That he did not doubt the reality of the vision is clearly shown by the statement of the angel.

The angel makes himself known, declares his dignity and authority. The angels properly have no names, but they receive one when they enter in communication with man. These names declare the characteristic of their mission. *Gabriel*, as this angel is called, means "Power of God"; for he announces events which call for an exercise of God's power. He made known to Daniel the mystery of the seventy weeks and announced the coming of the Messiah (Dan. ix, 21 ff.); here he announces the birth of St. John, and later the Virginal Birth of Jesus. When Gabriel states that he is *one who stands before God*, he simply declares, in language comprehensible to man, that he is one of the celestial spirits who minister to God and form the Heavenly Court. He is *sent*; and from this office these spirits receive the name "angel" ἄγγελος i.e., messenger. This name designates their office, not their nature; for by nature they are spirits (cf. Ps. ciii, 4; Hebr. i, 14).

Zachary's doubt is declared worthy of punishment. For

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(21) And the people were waiting for Zachary, and they wondered that he tarried in the sanctuary. (22) And when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they understood that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. And he made signs to them and remained dumb. (23) And it came to pass that, when the days of his ministry were fulfilled, he

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he received this message at a most solemn moment, in the Holy Place, through the ministry of an angel, after examples of like preternatural works of God had been given in the Old Testament. The punishment is that he shall be *dumb and unable to speak*, the double statement being made in order to add to the emphasis of the statement, or perhaps to indicate that both the faculty of speech and its use shall be taken from him. The punishment is most fitting; he who had doubted the word of God's messenger is deprived of the power of speech. This state shall continue until the words of the angel be fulfilled. Being a sign, as Zachary had requested, it was to cease when that which it signified and foretold came to pass. Finally, the reason for the punishment is given: *Because thou hast not believed my words.*

THE FULFILLMENT. The function that Zachary performed was of daily occurrence and should have required but a few moments. The vision and dialogue between him and the angel had taken considerable time, so that the people began to wonder why he tarried in the Holy Place. When he came forth, his countenance and the fact that he was unable to pronounce the usual priestly blessing at once acquainted them with the fact that something unusual had taken place. It may be that some inquired; but he was unable to answer, except by signs. And thus they became aware of the fact of the vision.

At the end of the week, when the course of Abia changed places in the Temple with the next course in order, Zachary returned to his home. The conception and birth of St. John

departed to his own house. (24) And after those days, his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself for five months, saying: (25) Thus hath the Lord done unto me in the days wherein he hath taken care to remove my reproach among men.

(26) And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, (27) to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the

was miraculous in a certain respect. Sterility was, by the power of God, removed from Elizabeth; and excepting this, the conception and birth of John was according to the usual law of nature. For this reason his conception is placed after the return of Zachary.

Elizabeth, on receiving this favor from God, retired into seclusion that she might give thanks to God for having removed from her the reproach of "barren woman." The specific time of *five months* seems to be mentioned in order to designate the time that elapsed till the next event recorded.

### *The Annunciation. I, 26-38*

As in the preceding narrative, so also here St. Luke first notes the time, place and persons concerned (26-27). The present event is dated *in the sixth month*, from the time Elizabeth conceived a son. Again the angel Gabriel is sent to announce to the Virgin Mary that God had chosen her to be the Mother of the Lord. St. Luke tells us her place of residence, her state in life and her name.

Nazareth, the home of Joseph and Mary, was an insignificant village in lower Galilee. It lay at the foot of a terrace-formed hill on the northern border of the Plain of Esdraelon. The village had no history, being unmentioned in the Old Testament; and it seems to have possessed no reputation of worth (cf. Jo. i, 46). Galilee was the name given to the northern district of Palestine, extending from the

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house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. (28) And the angel being come in, said to her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women. (29) And she was troubled at his saying, and pondered within herself what manner of salutation this might be.

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Lebanon to the Plain of Esdraelon, and from Carmel to the Jordan. It was called "Galilee (i.e., circle) of the Gentiles" by Isaias, ix, 1, because of the great number of strangers, non-Jews, who dwelt there.

The recipient of the angel's message is a *virgin*. This fact is emphasized by being mentioned twice in the same verse. She was not merely an unmarried woman but a virgin (παρθένος) in the strictest and most proper sense. At the time the angel came to her she was *espoused to a man named Joseph*. Espousals were a solemn contract of marriage and were more formal and binding than the "engagement" of the present day. The betrothal was normally arranged by the parents and entered upon before witnesses. From that day the marriage was looked upon as settled, and the betrothed woman was in the position of wife in several respects (cf. Gen. xxi, 21; Dt. xx, 7; xxii, 23-24; Jdg. xxiv, 2). The marriage consisted merely in the introduction of the bride into the home of the bridegroom. Sometimes this followed immediately upon the espousals; but usually some time elapsed between the two, often a year. This was the status of Mary. She was a virgin, promised in marriage to Joseph, and living at the home of her parents.

She was of the tribe of Juda and a descendant of David. Since she is the central figure in the narrative and St. Luke is introducing her to his readers, it seems but natural that the clause, *of the house of David*, should be referred to her. That Joseph was descended from David is mentioned in the next chapter. The construction of the present verse, *and the name etc.*, instead of "whose name was etc." does not exclude this interpretation, for St. Luke may wish, by this



construction, to emphasize the virginity of Mary. Neither is this interpretation excluded by the fact that Mary was a relative of Elizabeth, who was of the tribe of Levi; for inter-marriage between the tribes was not forbidden except in the case of an heiress, who was to marry within her own tribe. Moreover, the Davidic descent of Mary is indicated in verses 32 and 69 of this chapter, by St. Paul (cf. Rom. i, 3; II Tim. ii, 8; Hebr. vii, 14), and by the earliest Christian writers, v.g., Sts. Ignatius, Justin, Irenaeus.

The name *Mary* is derived, through the Greek, from the Aramaic name *Maryam*; and this Aramaic form was, in turn, derived from the Hebrew *Mirjam*. More than 60 meanings or significations, mostly symbolic, have been given this name. It may be noted that the Catholic Church does not argue to the dignity and prerogatives of Mary from her name; but the dogma being established, many have endeavored to find this doctrine contained in the name. The etymological derivation of the name is disputed. If it be a pure Hebrew name, it probably means "The Beautiful One" (Bardenhewer, Name Maria). If it be derived from the Egyptian, as seems possible from its first appearance among the Jewish people, it most likely means "Beloved of God" (Zorell, Lexicon Graecum, s.v.).

ANGELIC SALUTATION (28). In the salutation it will be noted that the angel does not address her by the name men have given her. He greets her as *Full of Grace*, as addressing her by her proper title and God-given name. That this translation of the title is correct, is proven by the ancient versions which translate in the same manner, by the Fathers who have all so understood it, from the usage of the Scripture (cf. Eph. i, 6, Greek text), and from the earlier English translations. The context shows that Mary was highly favored and pleasing in the sight of God; but it is Grace alone that renders one pleasing to the Almighty. Hence, the angel declares that Mary possesses a fullness of

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(30) And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found grace with God. (31) And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. (32) He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall

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Grace; that she is exalted above all other creatures in holiness and in the favors she has received from God.

*The Lord is with thee*, is a statement and not a wish. It continues the same sense as the preceding clause of the salutation. The expression is used of those whom God selects for a great work, and declares a high degree of God's protecting care and of closest union with Him (cf. Gen. xxxi, 3; Ex. iii, 12; Dt. xxxi, 8). Mary was chosen for the highest work and most exalted office, to be the Mother of God; by her fullness of Grace and qualities of mind and soul, she is most intimately united with her Creator; in a special manner, as the angel declares, God is with her.

*Blessed art thou among women*, is a Hebraism expressing comparison between her and all other women. The words declare that she is raised above all womenkind; that, among women, she is the most blessed and favored by God; and therefore she is worthy of praise above all others.

Mary was amazed by the high praise bestowed upon her by the angel. She is *troubled at his saying*, and not so much by his appearance as was the case of Zachary. In her humility, she is at a loss to understand why she is thus greeted. She betrays no excitement but *pondered within herself*. We find this characteristic of silent contemplation, of quiet meditation and holy reserve, mentioned frequently in the Gospel of St. Luke.

THE ANGEL'S MESSAGE (30-33). The angel now addresses her by name, declares again that she is under the special care of God, in whose sight she has found favor, and

delivers the message with which he was sent. The import of the message is evident: Mary is chosen to be the Mother of the Messias. To anyone possessing a knowledge of the Old Testament, and every pious Jew of the time had such knowledge, there can be no other meaning in the angel's words. His words are a re-echoing of the Messianic Prophecies (cf. Is. vii, 14; ix, 6-7; Dan. ii, 44; vii, 14). The angel thereby declares that the Prophecies are now to be fulfilled, and that Mary is the one chosen to be the Mother of the Messias. Some points of this message merit particular attention.

Mary is commanded to give the Son to be born of her the name Jesus; and the same command was given to Joseph (Mt. i, 21). This name in Hebrew is *Jeschua*, the shortened form of *Jehoschua*, meaning "God will save." As applied to the Son of Mary, to designate His office and mission, it signifies that salvation will come through Him; that He is the Savior. He is the Savior in the spiritual sense, as the angel made known to Joseph: "He shall save His people from their sins."

The Sacred Scriptures declare a person's character by saying that he shall be called such. So, when the angel declares that Jesus *shall be called the Son of the Most High*, he means that Jesus shall be the Son of God in reality and shall be recognized as such. Though holy men are called the children of God (cf. Lk. vi, 25), Jesus is the Son of God in a special manner, distinct from all others. He is the Son of God by nature and origin; others are children of God by adoption through Jesus Christ. The angel's words here show this distinction, and more plainly in verse 35.

The angel further declares that Jesus shall receive the *throne of David His father*. According to the flesh, Jesus was a descendant of David. Since He took flesh and blood of a Virgin, without the co-operation of man, this statement shows that Mary was also a descendant of David. Jesus

reign in the house of Jacob forever; (33) and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (34) But Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, for I know not man? (35) And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy One that shall

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does not receive the throne of David in the sense that He is to rule for a time only over the temporal kingdom that had been David's. David was a type, a figure, of Christ; and the kingdom of David was a type of the Kingdom of the Messiah. This Kingdom of the Messiah is here declared to be universal and eternal: He shall reign in the *house of Jacob*, not in a divided kingdom, and *for ever*, not a temporal kingdom.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH (34-35). "The Virgin found no reply to the angel's greeting; she speaks not of her Son's glory; but in holy wonder seeks for instruction." The question here and the angel's reply make evident and certain the Virgin Birth of Jesus.

Mary does not seek for proof, as Zachary had done; she believed the message and asked after the manner of fulfillment. This is evident from the fact that Zachary placed a physical impossibility as reason for his question; but not so Mary. She does not place conditions to her assent, nor does she refuse her co-operation in the designs of Divine Providence. She asks as to how, or in what manner, she is to become the Mother of the Messiah, since she *knows not man*. This expression is a Biblical euphemism signifying marital relations. The word of Mary, *I know not man*, plainly shows that she had made a vow of perpetual virginity. Since she is espoused to Joseph, a mere declaration that she had remained a virgin up to the present time would be meaningless, unless she had resolved that this state should persevere. The present tense in the statement embraces all time, the past, the present and the future. She is certain that her

be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (36) And behold, thy kinswoman Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who is called barren; (37) because with God there is nothing impossible. (38) And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

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holy resolve is pleasing to God; God has chosen her to be the Mother of the Messias; she seeks to know the will of God.

The angel replies that she is to give birth to Jesus in a virginal, supernatural and miraculous manner. His reply to her question contains and expresses a strong opposition to conception through the agency of man. Opposed to man is the power of the Holy Spirit. As in the beginning the Spirit of God moved over the waters and called the first creation into being (Gen. i, 2), so shall this same power create in Mary the germ of life, which the Son of God assumes as His own. And again, as the power of God hovered over the Ark of the Covenant, protecting and sanctifying it (cf. Ex. xl, 36), so shall the same power overshadow Mary, protecting and sanctifying her very flesh, from which the Son of God shall take His own flesh and blood. Consequently, it is by the power of God, by a miracle and without the intervention of man, that Mary is to become the Mother of Jesus, remaining ever a Virgin. (Cf. Mt. i, 18-23. In this passage, Joseph is instructed by an angel regarding the miraculous and virginal conception.)

A SIGN (36-37). Mary had not asked for proof or sign. However, the angel spontaneously gives her proof of the power of God, shown forth in Elizabeth. The exact relationship existing between Mary and Elizabeth is unknown. The Vulgate translates *συγγενίς cognata*; Douay, "cousin." The fact that they were of different tribes does not exclude close relationship; for it is sufficient that their mothers or

(39) And Mary rising up in those days, went into the hill-country with haste, into a city of Judea. (40) And she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth. (41) And it came to pass that, when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. (42) And she

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grandmothers should have married, the one a member of the tribe of Juda, the other a member of the tribe of Levi.

Without waiting to ascertain the truth of the angel's word in regard to Elizabeth, Mary gives her consent in words that express her absolute conformity to the will of God and faith in His word. *Behold the handmaid of the Lord*; she considers herself as the servant whose duty it is to obey the command and wish of the Master. *Be it done unto me according to thy word*, expresses faith and consent (St. Irenaeus), or is a prayer and a wish (St. Ambrose).

### *The Visitation.* I, 39-56

The angel had made known to Mary the condition of Elizabeth, who was in her "sixth month," and pointed to it as a sign. Mary saw in the words an invitation and an indication of the Will of God. Her going to visit her aged relative certainly was not due to curiosity or vanity. Her character, as described in the Gospels, and the fact that she had already given the assent of faith to the message of the angel excludes any such motive.

The "hill-country of Judea" was the mountainous district, including Jerusalem, as distinct from the plains. The name of the city in which Zachary lived is not mentioned in the Gospels. Since the sixth century, tradition places the home of Zachary at Ain-Karim, the ancient Carem, about four miles west of Jerusalem. Some have favored Hebron, others Jutta; but neither of these two towns was in the toparchy of the "hill-country" but in Idumea.

**ELIZABETH'S GREETING** (42-45). As soon as Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, she was *filled with*

cried out with a loud voice and said: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. (43) And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? (44) For behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. (45) And blessed is she that hath believed, because those things shall be fulfilled that were spoken unto her by the Lord.

(46) And Mary said: My soul doth magnify the Lord, (47) and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

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*the Holy Ghost*, who revealed to her the favor that had been bestowed upon the Virgin Mary. She is inspired by the Holy Spirit; and greets Mary as the Mother of the Messias. This mystery she could not have learned from men. With joy the unborn infant leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth is inspired to interpret this sign aright. It is common belief that John was at this moment cleansed from original sin and endowed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, so that he recognized the advent of the Messias. Thus the first special outpouring of the Grace of the Redeemer was worked through Mary.

The greeting is a hymn of praise to Mary. Elizabeth addresses her as *Blessed among women*, i.e., the one especially blessed above all woman, and as *Mother of my Lord*; and declares herself unworthy of the favor paid her by the visit of Mary. Finally, she praises the faith of Mary; the impersonal *she that hath believed*, being, as it were, another title of Mary.

THE MAGNIFICAT (46-55). The reply of Mary to the greeting of Elizabeth is the Magnificat, "the most beautiful piece of religious poetry in the world"; in fact, one of the most sublime of all the songs and canticles contained in the Scriptures. While it resembles those of the Old Testament, it clothes those sacred hymns of praise and thanksgiving with a new light and gives to them a new meaning.

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(48) Because he hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaid; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. (49) Because he that is mighty hath done great things unto me; and holy is his name. (50) And his mercy is from generation unto generation, to them that fear

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The Magnificat is divided into three parts: (1) 46-49, in which Mary gives praise and thanks to God for the great favors bestowed upon her and utters a prophecy as to the honor which shall be given her by all true Christian generations; (2) 50-53, in which Mary passes to a consideration of the Works of Providence in the government of the world, the mercy and power of God; (3) 54-55, in which she returns to the Chosen People and praises God for the favors bestowed upon them, bringing about the fulfillment of all the promises and hopes contained in the Old Law.

*My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.* Soul and spirit are here synonymous and signify the entire inner and immaterial part of man's being. It is called soul in as far as it is the life of the body; spirit in as far as it is a spiritual substance (St. Augustine). Mary declares that God has granted her so great and unheard of dignity and favor that it cannot be expressed in words; her whole being, as it were, pours forth itself in joyful acclaim of the wonders of God.

*He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaid,* gives the cause of her exultation. She does not refer to the virtue of humility, but to the lowliness of her state in the eyes of the world. Though she was of the family of David, she was poor and unknown to men; but God passed over all the great ones of earth and bestowed His choicest blessing upon her. And because God has designed to so honor her, she declares: *All generations shall call me blessed.* The praise of Mary was begun by Elizabeth, is heard again during the life of Jesus (cf. Lk. xi, 27), and has continued throughout all centuries in the Catholic world. She is so closely united with



him. (51) He hath shown strength in his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their hearts. (52) He hath put down the mighty from their thrones; and hath exalted the lowly. (53) He hath filled the hungry with good

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Jesus and associated with Him in the Work of Redemption, that whoever desires to honor Him rightly must also honor her; and he who dishonors the Mother, also dishonors the Son. The reason for the honor paid to Mary is given in the following.

*He that is mighty hath done great things to me.* The Mighty One is one of the names given to God in the Old Testament. Mary applies the name to God here because of the miracle accomplished in her. She does not glorify herself, nor does she take the honor unto herself. She declares that all her greatness and the consequent honor paid her by future generations is due to the Grace and favors of God. Here the doctrine on the veneration of the Saints is declared. We honor the Saints because of the manifestation of God's grace in them and their relation to God; and the greater this manifestation of grace and the closer the relation with God, the greater also is the honor paid the Saints.

Mary now turns to praise God in the government of the world and in His dealings with mankind in general. The first of the works and the greatest of the attributes of God is His mercy, which is from generation unto generation (cf. Ps. cii, 17). The *fear of God* is always given in the Old Testament as the distinctive mark of the servants of God; it is the formula used to express piety. The mercy of God had shown itself throughout the history of mankind and reached its highest manifestation in the sending of the Redeemer.

The second attribute praised is the Power of God. *He hath shown might in His arm* is an anthropomorphism, i.e., the application of human things to God. The reason for

things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. (54) He hath raised up his servant Israel, so as to be mindful of his mercy. (55) Even as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed forever. (56) And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

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such modes of speech is man's limitation of thought and speech. They are used to represent the purely spiritual nature of God to the mind of man. The meaning of the phrase used here is that God has shown forth His mighty power. ✓ *He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their hearts*, i.e., those who have thrown off the proper subjection to God and established their own will and pleasure as their law have been brought to nothing through the power of God. The thought is amplified: *He hath put down the mighty from their thrones, and hath exalted the lowly*. He divested the mighty ones of the office and dignity which they possessed, or seemed to possess; and has raised the humble to an exalted position. Mary here announces the great principle of God's dealings with man, a principle so often inculcated by Jesus: He that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

The *filling of the hungry* and *sending the rich empty away* must be understood in the spiritual and moral sense. They who esteem themselves poor and needy are filled with the good things of God; while they who deem themselves sufficient unto themselves and do not realize the need they have of the graces of God, are abandoned by Him. The first part of the verse echoes the beatitude: Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall have their fill.

In the third part of the Canticle Mary returns to the principal theme, setting forth the favors shown to the Chosen People. *He hath raised up his servant Israel*. God took Israel under His care. Having been chosen out from all the nations of the world and made God's own people, Israel is called His servant. The choice and protection of Israel has

(57) Now Elizabeth's time that she should be delivered was fulfilled; and she brought forth a son. (58) And her neighbors and kinsfolk heard that the Lord had shown great mercy towards her, and they congratulated her.

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now reached its culmination in that God sent His Only Son, who took flesh and blood of the seed of Abraham. This raising up of Israel is an act of God's infinite mercy: for in so doing, He was *mindful of His mercy*. Since God had allowed so many centuries to elapse before sending the Redeemer, the actual fulfillment of the promise is spoken of as a remembering, a calling to mind.

The merciful promise now being fulfilled was that which was made to *Abraham and to his seed forever*. The promise to Abraham is recorded in Gen. xvii, 7; to Isaac in Gen. xxvi, 4; to Jacob in Gen. xxviii, 4; to David in Ps. cxxxi, 11. With this expression of lively faith and joyful confidence in the immediate fulfillment of the ancient promises, the Canticle of Mary ends.

The account of the Visitation closes with the statement that Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months. When we compare the statement with the "sixth month" of verse 26, we are led to believe that the Virgin Mary remained with Elizabeth till the birth of St. John. The fact that St. Luke mentions her return before recording the birth of John does not prove the opposite. He completes one narrative before beginning a second. Thus he also notes the childhood of John before speaking of the birth of Jesus, and the imprisonment of John before the baptism of Jesus. As many another historian, he relates the course of one series of events before taking up another which is contemporaneous with the first.

#### *The Birth of St. John. I, 57-80*

In the due course of nature Elizabeth bore a son, and her neighbors and kinsfolk gathered at her home to felicitate

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(59) And it came to pass that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him by his father's name Zachary. (60) And his mother answering, said: Not so; but he shall be called John. (61) And they said to her: There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. (62) And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. (63) And having demanded a writing-tablet, he wrote saying: John is his name. And they all wondered. (64) And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was loosed, and he spoke, praising God. (65) And fear came upon all their neighbors; and all these things were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judea. (66) And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying: What manner of child shall this be? For the hand of the Lord was with him.

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and rejoice with her (57-58). They rejoiced that God had removed from her the "reproach among men." Greater wonder was occasioned at the child's circumcision.

Circumcision was commanded Abraham and his descendants as the sign of the Covenant which God made with them (Gen. xvii, 10-13). Since this ceremony signified incorporation into the theocratic alliance and membership among the people of God, the new-born infant received its name at the same time. As a sign of the Covenant with God, it was also symbolic of justice (cf. Dt. x, 16; Jer. iv, 4; Ac. vii, 51; Rom. iv, 11). By this sign God revealed Himself as the Lord of life, the Judge of right order, that concupiscence being subjected to the Law of God, circumcision should become the pledge of subjection to all things commanded by the Lord. In fact, circumcision was a solemn promise of subjection to the Law (cf. Gal. iv, 3). In the New Law of Christ, man becomes a member of the Kingdom of God and consecrated and dedicated to the Lord through Baptism.

For the rite of circumcision, the relatives and friends of Zachary and Elizabeth gathered at their home; not in the Temple, for this was not required, neither could Elizabeth

have been present. Those who came for the ceremony desired to honor the father by giving the son his name. But Elizabeth, having learned from Zachary the vision and message of the angel, insists that the child be called John. They object that there was none among all their relatives who bore this name (though the name was common among the Jews).

The relatives appeal to Zachary for a decision. From the words, *they made signs*, some have inferred that Zachary was deaf as well as dumb. But neither in the declaration of the punishment nor in his cure is there any mention of deafness. Through mere signs it would hardly have been possible to make known to him the course of events. He had listened to the discussion; and when they indicate that he should decide, he demands (by sign) a *writing-tablet*, a small piece of wood covered with wax, upon which words were traced with a metal stilus. Zachary writes: *John is his name*. There is a note of finality in his words; for there is no room for doubt or discussion in those things that God has commanded.

The word of the angel which Zachary had doubted is now fulfilled, the command he received is carried out. The term of his punishment is ended; the sign which had been given passes away. Immediately upon the designation of the child's name, Zachary recovers the faculty of speech and makes first use of it in praising God. Before recording the song of praise, St. Luke notes the effect of these wonders upon those present. *Fear came upon all*; a fear of reverence, a religious fear, took possession of all who beheld what had taken place. So often did they speak of it that the news spread throughout all the hill-country of Judea; and all wondered what was in store for one whose birth had been attended by such wonders. All recognized that the *hand of the Lord was with him*, i.e., that the power of God was with John, and that he was under a special Providence.

## 28 THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

(67) And Zachary his father was filled with the Holy Ghost; and he prophesied, saying: (68) Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because he hath visited and wrought the redemption of his people; (69) and he hath raised up a horn of salvation to us, in the house of David his servant, (70) as

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THE BENEDICTUS (67-79). The Canticle of Zachary, even more than that of Mary, is based entirely upon the Old Testament Prophecies. Uniting the Old and the New, it has been called "the last prophecy of the Old Law and the first of the New." It is a real poem according to the rules of Hebrew versification, but has a special structure and a somewhat heavy style. Each part is made up of a single sentence, with the propositions connected like the links of a chain. The two parts of the Canticle are: (1) 68-75, in which Zachary sings the praise of God for the blessings which the Messiah brings; (2) 76-79, in which he sets forth the honor and mission of his son in connection with the Messiah, and points out the blessings of peace which the Messiah brings.

The one true God is called *the Lord God of Israel* to distinguish Him from the false gods of the Gentiles; also because He chose Israel as His people, favored them with special care, and was worshiped by them alone. Zachary gives praise that God *hath visited* His people. "Visitations of God" are spoken of in the Scriptures in two different senses: as conferring a benefit or special aid, or as inflicting punishment. The visitation spoken of by Zachary is one of blessing and benefit; God has conferred (prophetical perfect) a great favor upon His people by sending the Redeemer, whose coming is now at hand. *Redemption*, λύτρωσις, even in the Old Testament, has not only the meaning of being freed from foreign oppressors but also of being cleansed from moral guilt (cf. Ps. cxxx, 8); from the Christian standpoint, it has the meaning of being freed from the slavery of sin (cf. Eph. i, 7). Zachary most likely had both modes of redemption in mind.

The *horn* is used in Sacred Scripture to denote power and

he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, who were from the beginning: (71) Salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us; (72) to perform mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy testament, (73) the oath which he swore to Abraham our father, that he would grant unto us, (74) that being delivered from the hand of our enemies, we should serve him without fear, (75) in holi-

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strength. The figure is taken from the strength that resides in the horns of animals. The *horn of salvation* which God has raised up, is the powerful King and Messias, who is sent to Israel. He is raised up *in the house of David*, because He is born of the family of David. The coming of the Mighty Savior is declared a fulfillment of the ancient prophecies: *As he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, who were from the beginning*. From the beginning of His dealings with the Chosen People, God promised them a Savior; and this Savior is about to enter into the world. In the following verses (71-75) is described the nature of the Redemption to be wrought by the Mighty Savior.

*Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.* Under this figure and in this language the Redeemer had been promised by the mouth of the holy prophets; and most of Zachary's contemporaries considered deliverance from foreign power as essential to the Messianic Kingdom. The view of Zachary did not stop here; for he spoke under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and God does not inspire men to utter falsehoods. While the prophets of old spoke of the Kingdom of the Messias in natural and temporal figures, they likewise pointed out that this Kingdom was to be spiritual and supernatural. The reason for sending the Redeemer is expressed in the words: *To perform mercy to our fathers*. In sending the Messias, God showed mercy to the fathers, because by faith in the Messias to come they were saved; likewise, the coming of the Messias meant

ness and justice before him, all our days. (76) And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways, (77) to give knowledge of salvation to his people, unto the remission of their sins; (78) because of the intense mercy of our God, whereby the Orient from on high hath visited

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the re-opening of Heaven and the deliverance of the holy men and women from Limbo. By this act of mercy, God also remembered *his holy testament*, which is described in verse 73, as the *oath he swore to Abraham*. In Gen. xxii, 16-18, God's promise to Abraham is worded as an oath. Every word of God is absolute and true; but He deigned to give men the assurance which they find in an oath, and thus impressed upon their minds the certainty of the promise. Verses 74 and 75 declare the object of the oath, or the benefits of the Redemption. The truly Christian character of these verses should be noted.

God swore to Abraham that He would grant that, being delivered from our enemies, *we may serve Him without fear, in holiness and justice before Him, all our days*. The expressions here used can be understood only in a spiritual sense. The object of the oath made to Abraham and of the Redemption is not material freedom or political advantage; but that man might serve God without fear of his enemies, and such enemies as are opposed to holiness and justice. This justice is true, interior justice, *before God*, i.e., in the sight of God. Political enemies and unbelievers may and do retard the extension of the Kingdom of God; they also may make it impossible to carry out public religious duties. But they cannot destroy the spiritual life here described, except in so far as man lays himself open to their influence. Though Satan may attack man, he cannot destroy that serenity of mind and soul which man has in the power and grace of the Redeemer.



Zachary now addresses his son and foretells his character and mission. *And thou, child*, seems to single out John from among all others. Besides possessing the qualities of justice and holiness, spoken of in the previous part of the Cantic, he is to be *the prophet of the Most High*. John was the last of the prophets, and more than a prophet; for he went before the Messiah to prepare His way. While the other prophets foretold from afar, John not only spoke of Him as coming but also pointed Him out as present. The aim and purpose of John's mission is declared: *To give knowledge of salvation to his people, unto the remission of sins*. By his preaching John showed men the way to salvation. He came as a preacher of penance that the people might amend their lives and prepare themselves for the Messiah, from whom they were to receive the remission of sin. Ignorance and attachment to sin are the two great obstacles to participation in the Messianic Blessings. To remove these, John is sent.

The salvation for which John prepared the people, is declared an effect of the intense mercy of God. Because of this mercy, *the Orient from on high hath visited us*. Orient, *ἀνατολή*, is here a substantive, another name for the sun. Just as the natural sun is said to rise over the world and dispel darkness, so also Jesus Christ the Sun of Justice came into the world, "from on high," to remove the darkness of sin and error. The coming of the Messiah was foretold as the coming of light to them that sit in darkness (cf. Is. ix, 2), and in St. John's Gospel Jesus is declared the Light that enlightens every man.

The Cantic closes with a reference to the benefits brought by the Orient, Jesus Christ. Those who *sit in darkness and in the shadow of death*, are they who are bound by ignorance of divine truth and by sin; they are enlightened. And as the light of the sun enables men to direct their steps, so also does Christ bring the light by which man may walk

### 32 THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

us, (79) to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

(80) And the child grew and was strengthened in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his manifestation to Israel.

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on the way to salvation. The way of salvation is called the *way of peace*, because it is the way that leads to peace, both here and in the next life.

St. Luke adds to the narrative a brief notice of the youth of St. John (80). With bodily development, his spiritual and moral development kept pace. In early youth, when his bodily and spiritual development warranted it, he retired into the desert, there to prepare himself by solitude and penance. The desert into which he retired was most likely the desert east of the Jordan where he also began his mission.

## Chapter II

(1) And it came to pass in those days that there went forth a decree from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. (2) This first enrollment was made when Quirinius was governor of Syria. (3) And all went

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### *The Birth of Jesus. II, 1-7*

Both Matthew and Luke tell us that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, according to the prophecy of Micheas (5, 2). While the first Gospel simply states the fact, St. Luke gives the time, place and circumstances of the Birth of Jesus. He tells us how it came to pass that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, though the home of Mary was in Nazareth. This was due to the census.

THE CENSUS (1-3). *In those days*, i.e., during the reign of Herod the Great, there went forth a decree from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. The *whole world* is an hyperbole of the time, designating the Roman Empire. In the same way the Roman Emperors assumed the title of "Lords of the world." The decree meant that a census was to be taken up throughout the entire Roman world. This decree may have been a special enactment; or it may have been an order to extend to the whole Empire the census that was taken up in certain Provinces.

This census was taken up when Quirinius was Governor of Syria. The name *Cyrinus* in Douay and Vulgate is the Greek form of the name. In the year 10 B.C., Quirinius was placed in command of the armies in Syria and prosecuted the war against the mountainous tribe of the Homonades.

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to be enrolled, every one into his own city. (4) And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David which is called Bethlehem,

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In this capacity as military commander in Syria, or as "Governor" in the strict sense, he had charge of the census. The term *governor* here should be understood in the wide sense of one who exercises a function of government. For St. Luke uses generic, not specific terms, in speaking of those in power. In speaking of Quirinius, he uses the verb ἡγεμονεύω, the same verb he uses in speaking of Pilate, who was a Procurator (iii, 1); he uses the noun ἡγεμών in speaking of Felix and Festus, procurators (Ac. xxiii, 24; xxvi, 30); and ἡγεμονία in speaking of the reign of Tiberius (iii, 1). Quirinius was, then, exercising some authority of government in Syria which connected him with the census. The census is called the first, either because it was the first of the cycle of census instituted by Augustus, or because it was the first directed by Quirinius in Syria, the second taking place 6-7 A.D.

By the decree all were commanded to return to their own city to be enrolled. The earlier Roman census were taken in the place of residence; but during the reign of Augustus the *professio ad domicilium*, which required all to return to their homes, was inaugurated. Likewise the ancient Jewish census was taken according to tribes and families, which required presence in one's own city. (See Appendix I).

THE JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM (4-5). The census required every one to go into *his own city*. For a Jew, this meant the home of his ancestors. As the whole nation was divided into tribes, so each tribe was divided into families. The *family of David* comprised all who were descended from him. Since Bethlehem was the city of David, Joseph was obliged to journey thither for the enrollment.

On this journey he is accompanied by Mary. We note

because he was of the house and family of David, (5) to be enrolled with Mary, his espoused wife, who was with child. (6) And it came to pass that, while they were there, her

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the delicate touch of the artist in the words: *his espoused wife*. Mary and Joseph were husband and wife; yet St. Luke still designates her as "espoused," to show forth her virginity — a true spouse, yet as chaste as one betrothed. It is uncertain whether Mary was obliged to make the journey to Bethlehem. Among the Jews, women had no need to be registered directly, for the husband registered for the entire family. The Roman census included women (cf. Livy III, 3); so that Mary may have been obliged by the decree to register in Bethlehem. It may be that Joseph had decided to make his residence in Bethlehem; for the Gospel accounts show that the Holy Family remained there some time after the birth of Jesus; and Joseph, on the return from Egypt, had a mind to again make his home there. Further, it is also probable that Mary received an enlightenment from Heaven.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS (6-7). In the simplest and chastest language St. Luke describes the central event in the history of the world. While they were at Bethlehem, perhaps on the day of arrival, Mary's time was accomplished and she brought forth her Divine Son. Fulfilling the duties of mother, she wraps her Son in the clothing of infants and lays Him in a manger.

The external reason for the birth of Jesus in a stable is given in the words: *There was no room for them in the inn*. The Oriental inn, or khan, was a low structure, built of rough stones and generally but one storey in height. It consists, for the most part, of an enclosure for cattle and an arched recess for the travellers. Joseph and Mary could find no accommodations in the inn at Bethlehem. They were directed to a cave or grotto, which served as a protection for

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days were accomplished that she should be delivered. (7) And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

(8) And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields and keeping the night watch over their

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cattle. Both ancient tradition and modern research are agreed on the location of the birth-place of the Savior. The earliest writer to identify the grotto of the Nativity was St. Justin, a native of Palestine, born in the first century. It was transformed into a sanctuary and, over the grotto, St. Helena built a church.

FIRSTBORN SON. Certain writers seize upon the words "her firstborn son" as a proof that Mary did not remain a Virgin after the birth of Jesus. They repeat the age-old sophism: If only-born then not firstborn; if firstborn then not only-born. This argument put forth in the name of "science" disregards the first principle of the science of criticism: expressions must be understood as an author uses them. "Firstborn," as used in Sacred Scripture, does not designate one after whom others were born, but one before whom no others were born. This is the definition of "firstborn" given in Ex. xiii, 2 and xxxiv, 19; and this definition is repeated by St. Luke, in verse 23 of this chapter. We must abide by Sacred Scripture's definition of the terms it uses. "Firstborn" was, in a sense, a technical term, and was applied to one who had no brothers or sisters, to an only-child. He was, according to the Law, "sacred to the Lord," certain duties had to be fulfilled in his regard, and he possessed certain privileges.

### *Call of the Shepherds.* II, 8-20

In the neighborhood of Bethlehem shepherds had their flocks in the fields. That they were *keeping the night watch*, informs us that the Savior was born during the night. The night was usually divided into four "watches": 6 to 9 P.M., 9 to midnight, midnight to 3 A.M., 3 A.M. to 6. As the shep-

flock. (9) And the angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round them; and they feared with a great fear. (10) And the angel said to them: Fear not; for behold, I bring you tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people. (11) For there is born unto you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

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herds were watching over their flocks, suddenly an angel of God, perhaps Gabriel, stood by them. The apparition of the angel was accompanied by a brilliant light, called *the brightness of God*, because it was a manifestation of the glory and majesty of God. The Gospel clearly indicates that the angel was visible; the bright light indicated that he spoke in the name of God.

As the shepherds were filled with fear at the celestial apparition, the angel allays their fears by giving them motives for joy and confidence. His mission is one of gladness, bringing *good tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people*. As the shepherds would understand this word, the joy was prepared for the entire nation; but the words have the consequent meaning: for the entire world. The tidings of great joy are: *This day is born a Savior who is Christ the Lord*. No more joyous announcement could be made to the world; for at last the long expected and ardently desired Redeemer is come. The titles given the new born Infant sum up the "glad tidings," or Gospel, announced here for the first time. He is a *Savior*, one who was to redeem mankind from sin and usher in the Messianic Kingdom of Grace. He is *Christ*, i.e., the Anointed, or the Messiah. This name was not a proper name but a title given the Messiah. In the Old Law, kings, priests and prophets were anointed with oil in the conferring of their office. The Messiah possesses all these offices of King, Priest and Prophet; so that he was designated as "the Anointed." The title later became a proper name, added by the Christians to the name Jesus.

(12) And this shall be sign unto you: You shall find an Infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

(13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God and saying: (14) Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.

(15) And it came to pass, when the angels had departed from them into Heaven, the shepherds said one to another:

He is *the Lord*. This title is distinct from "Christ"; and since "Christ" and "Messias" are synonymous, another meaning must be given this title to avoid tautology; and the other signification is "God." Hence the angel announces that there is born a Savior, who is the Messias and Divine.

The angel directs them how to find the new-born Savior. The sign given is that they shall find him wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. The sense of the angel's words is: When you find an infant as I describe him, you will know that he is the one of whom I speak and that what I say to you is true. The sign may have been definite enough to the shepherds as indicating the only place where an infant might be found in a manger; or, the angel may have pointed out the place.

THE ANGELS' HYMN (13-14). An additional testimony to the dignity of Jesus follows upon the angel's message. Suddenly there appeared a *multitude of the heavenly army*, the angels being thus designated because of their number, their power and obedience to the commands of God. They are called the Army of God; and He is called the Lord of Hosts (cf. III Kgs. xxii, 19; Ps. cxlviii, 2).

The angels' hymn consists of two members, in perfect harmony and parallel. The first refers to God, the second to man. *Glory to God in the highest*, i.e., glory is given to God who dwells in the highest. Through the Incarnation, God received from Jesus, as Man, the greatest glory and praise possible; and to this is added the glory given to God



Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us. (16) And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. (17) And seeing, they made known the word that was told them concerning the child. (18) And all who heard wondered at those things that were told them by the shepherds. (19) But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart. (20) And the shep-

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by angels and men because of the Incarnation. *On earth peace to men of good will.* This is not so much external peace between man and man, but internal peace of the soul, peace between God and man (cf. Rom. v, 1). *Good will* here does not indicate a quality in man, but God's gracious will towards man. In the New Testament, *eudokia* always designates God's gracious will towards man. This was especially manifested in the Incarnation.

ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS (15-20). As soon as the angels had ceased their hymn and departed, the shepherds hastened to Bethlehem. As the angel had announced, they find the Infant lying in a manger. Having seen, they believed the word of the angel that the Infant was the Messiah.

In his admirable simplicity of style St. Luke here makes a rapid sketch of the impression made upon three classes of persons. *All that heard* are those to whom the shepherds related the events of the night. They were filled with wonder at the narrative; but this seems as far as the impression on them went. The shepherds returned to their flocks, praising and glorifying God.

While others wondered and spoke of the unusual events, *Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart.* She gathered and kept in her memory all the things she saw and the words she heard in regard to Jesus. Amidst all these marvels, so calm and recollected did she remain, that

herds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, as it was told to them.

(21) And when eight days were accomplished that the child should be circumcised, his name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

(22) And when the days of their purification according

nothing escaped her. And from her maternal memories she formed a rich treasure, which she later communicated to the Apostles. St. Luke here seems to make grateful remembrance of the treasure of knowledge thus communicated, and acknowledges her as the source of these narratives.

*Circumcision, Purification, Presentation. II, 21-40*

THE CIRCUMCISION (21). Jesus was sent, according to St. Paul, "in the likeness of sinful flesh" and became like to us in all things except sin. He therefore underwent the ceremony of circumcision. It was the first act of obedience by Him who became obedient even to the death of the Cross. Though Jesus was not subject to circumcision, He obeyed the Law for our sake and for our instruction. He wished to give an example of humility and obedience, to show respect for the existing Law and that this Law was holy and from God. At this time Jesus, as Man, became a member of the Chosen People of God and received the name Jesus as the angel had commanded in the name of God.

THE PURIFICATION AND PRESENTATION (22-24). According to the Law, from which St. Luke quotes in verse 23, every firstborn male was holy to the Lord. The firstborn of animals and the first-fruits of the fields were offered in sacrifice. The firstborn of men had been destined, at first, for the exercise of priestly functions in the family. But since God had restricted the office of priesthood and the ministry of the Temple to the tribe of Levi, the exemp-

to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, (23) as it is written in the law of the Lord: Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord; (24) and to offer a sacrifice according as it is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.

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tion of the others had to be compensated by the offering of five shekels. (Ex. xiii, 2; Num. viii, 6-18; xviii, 15-23). It will be noted that St. Luke here gives the definition of "firstborn," who is one *that openeth the womb*, i.e., one before whom no other was born. The reason for this Law was to show God's supreme dominion over all creation, by reason of which he demanded the first-fruits for Himself. The redemption, or presentation of the firstborn to the Lord, could take place at any time, though the obligation began to urge as soon as the child was born.

According to another enactment of the Law, a mother remained "unclean" after childbirth, forty days if the child was a boy and sixty days if the child was a girl. This meant in the words of the Law that the mother "shall not touch any holy thing, neither shall she enter the sanctuary." At the end of the forty or sixty days respectively, which constituted the *days of purification*, the mother was required to offer a sacrifice. If the parents were wealthy, the offering consisted of a lamb and a turtle-dove or a young pigeon; in case the parents were poor, a second dove or pigeon was substituted for the lamb (Lev. xii, 1-8).

Forty days after the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph brought Him to Jerusalem. Their purpose was to fulfil the two requirements of the Law mentioned above. Being poor, they made the offering of *two turtle-doves or two young pigeons*. St. Luke is speaking according to the wording of the law, which left a choice between the pair of fowl to be offered, and does not state which pair Mary offered.

(25) And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was in him. (26) And it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Christ of the Lord. (27) And he came in the spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do

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SIMEON (25-28). When the Holy Family were in the Temple, they were greeted by a man named Simeon. He was an inhabitant of Jerusalem, a holy and devout man. He was *waiting*, i.e., ardently longing for the coming of the Messiah, who is called the *consolation of Israel*; for it was foretold that He would be the Consoler of His people (cf. Is. lxi, 1-3; lx, 1-22). It had been revealed to him that he should not die till he had seen the Messiah.

In virtue of a special inspiration of the Holy Spirit, *in the Spirit*, he entered the Temple at the same time as the Holy Family. He recognized as Messiah the Child whom Mary carries. Taking the Child in his arms, he praised God for having sent the Redeemer and thanks Him for the privilege of beholding the Messiah. The desire of a lifetime has been realized; the promise made Simeon is fulfilled. He expresses his thoughts and emotions in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving, called the Nunc Dimittis.

THE NUNC DIMITTIS (29-32). In the first strophe of the Canticle (29) is contained an act of thanksgiving. Simeon represents himself as a servant or watchman who is now to be released from duty. He is the *servant* whom the Lord now dismisses. *Now* is placed at the beginning of the sentence with emphasis and is to be referred to *in peace*. Simeon can now die in peace, with the joy and serenity born of a knowledge of God's favor. This verse may be a wish; more probably it is a statement. Simeon considers the fulfillment of the promise that he shall see the

for him according to the custom of the law, (28) he also took him into his arms and praised God, saying: (29) Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace; (30) because my eyes have seen thy salvation, (31) which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples: (32) A light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

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Savior a prelude to his own peaceful death; and declares this to be imminent.

The second strophe of the Cantic (30-31) expresses the reason for gratitude and cause of perfect peace. Simeon has seen the *Salvation of the Lord*. Jesus is called the "Salvation" because He is the author of salvation (cf. Hebr. v, 9). By divine inspiration and revelation Simeon knows that Christ came to save all, that the Messianic Blessings are offered to all men; for salvation is *prepared before the face of all peoples*.

In the third strophe of the Cantic (32), Christ the Lord is described as a *light to the revelation of the Gentiles*. He is the Light that brings revelation and truth to the Gentiles who are in the darkness of sin and ignorance (cf. Gen. xxii, 18; Ps. xcix, 1-5; Is. ii, 2). He is also the *glory of his people Israel*, because He was born, lived and labored in Israel; and from them salvation came to the world (cf. Jo. iv, 22; Rom. xv, 27).

Joseph and Mary wondered at the many details of our Lord's life and mission pointed out by Simeon; they were filled with wonder at this new miraculous manifestation of the glory of Jesus. The fact that Joseph is here called *His father* should cause no difficulty. After the insistence of St. Luke on the fact of the Virgin Birth, after he has once clearly set forth the situation, it is but natural that he should speak according to popular estimation. Besides, St. Joseph, being the husband of Mary and the head of the family,

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(33) And his father and mother were wondering at the things that were spoken concerning him. (34) And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother: Behold, this child is set for the fall and the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted; (35) and

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possessed certain paternal rights and duties. This same should be remembered when like expressions, giving the opinions of those to whom the mystery of the Virgin Birth had not yet been revealed, are recorded in the Gospels, v.g., Mt. xiii, 55; Lk. iv, 22; Jo. i, 45. Such expressions do not express the belief of the sacred writers; and when they use them, they know that they would not be misunderstood by those who were willing to consider all the facts in the matter.

THE PROPHECY OF SIMEON (34-35). After giving them his blessing, Simeon addresses a prophecy to Mary concerning the Child and her share in his sufferings. This is the first note of sadness in the Gospel, the first indication that not all would be partakers in the blessings of salvation, that not all would accept the Savior.

According to Divine Providence the salvation or condemnation of man is connected with Jesus. He is *set for the fall and the resurrection of many*. Salvation comes through Jesus alone; and men will be divided into two camps, the one receiving and the other rejecting him. Since the salvation, the "resurrection," or the condemnation, the "fall," of man is dependent on his attitude towards Christ, He is said to be "set" for their rise or fall. This double phase of the Messias' coming was foretold by the prophet Isaias (viii, 14), declared by Christ Himself (Lk. xi, 23; Mt. xxi, 42-44), and by the Apostles (cf. Ac. iv, 11; Rom. ix, 33). An example of this division is found in Jo. vii, 12-13, 40-43.

Jesus is said to be a *sign that shall be contradicted*, i.e., as it were, a standard around which many shall gather, but

thy own soul a sword shall pierce; that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed.

(36) And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser; she was far advanced in

against which others will rebel. Jesus cannot be ignored, and so the minds of men must divide in the sight of this standard; they must be either for or against Him. There is no middle way, no compromise. Not all will receive and believe in Him, and thus He is the sign that is contradicted. And again Mother and Son are shown closely and intimately united; for even she shall be drawn into the sufferings, caused by this contradiction of her Son: *Thy own soul a sword shall pierce*. She shall experience a sorrow and an anguish so great and intense as to be comparable with the physical pain caused by the blow of a sword.

All this shall lay bare the hearts of men: *That out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed*. Man's attitude towards Christ, and consequently towards His Blessed Mother, will manifest the character of man. The opposition to Christ will be a revelation of the evil and wickedness of men's hearts, for they reject Him because their works are evil and they hate the light (cf. Jo. iii, 19-21).

This prophecy was fulfilled during the life of Christ. The hatred and opposition, stirred up and fostered by the scribes and Pharisees, continued until they had crucified Him; and beneath the Cross there stood His Mother, the Mater Dolorosa. In the history of the Church and of the human race the conflict still rages and will continue to the end of time. Men cannot ignore Christ or His Church; and by that very fact they are either with or against Him, either personally or as He lives in His Church.

ANNA, THE PROPHETESS (36-38). A second witness to give testimony to Christ at the Presentation was an aged widow named Anna. As is his custom, St. Luke gives a brief description of her character. She may be called a

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years, and had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity; (37) and she was a widow until fourscore and four years, who departed not from the temple, by fasting and prayer serving day and night. (38) And coming in at that same hour, she gave thanks to God, and spoke of him to all who looked for the redemption of Jerusalem.

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*prophetess* in the strict sense, since she prophesied concerning Christ; or she may be so called in the wide sense, as one who possessed special gifts in the spiritual order, especially the guidance of the Holy Spirit. She had lived with her husband seven years, until his death. That St. Luke says this was *from her virginity*, not only means that she was a virgin when married, but also that she married at an early age, i.e., at an age when we properly speak of virginity in distinction to innocence (both in the physical sense). After the death of her husband, Anna did not re-marry; but as a true widow, she sought her consolation in the service of God (cf. I Tim. v, 5-9). And so she arrived at the age of 84 years, spending a great portion of her time in the Temple, being present at the sacrifices and other ceremonies of divine worship. She gave herself up to fasting and prayer, which two works are here designated as a service to God.

When the Holy Family was in the Temple, Anna also entered and recognized the presence of the Messiah. She gave thanks to God and acknowledged the Gift bestowed upon mankind. Afterwards, whenever the opportunity presented itself, she spoke of Christ to all who shared her faith, hope and love.

RETURN TO NAZARETH (39-40). After the Holy Family had done all things required by the Law, they returned to Nazareth. The phrase *performed all things*, occurs five times in the first two chapters of the Gospel, and not without reason. The Holy Spirit, through St. Luke's writing, teaches the exact and conscientious fulfillment of duty and



(39) And after they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. (40) And the child grew and waxed strong, full of wisdom; and the grace of God was in him.

(41) And his parents went every year to Jerusalem at the solemn feast of the pasch. (42) And when he was

places before us the models of such exactness and obedience, Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

Verse 40 constitutes a conclusion and a summary of the early years of Jesus. He progressed physically as other children, thus showing forth the reality of His human nature. He was *full of wisdom*, or as verse 52 states, "He grew in wisdom." Jesus did not advance in interior wisdom, but in exterior. This advance is explained and illustrated by distinguishing four kinds of wisdom in Christ: (1) Divine Wisdom which He possessed as God and which was incapable of increase, being infinite; (2) The Beatific Vision, which He possessed as Man during His life and which was also incapable of increase; (3) Infused Knowledge, such as was given to the prophets, which was in Jesus in all its fulness; (4) Experimental Knowledge, which is acquired by the exercise of the mental faculties and bodily senses. This knowledge was in Christ, for He was truly man; and this knowledge, or wisdom, was capable of increase (cf. Hebr. v, 8). *The Grace of God was in Him*, or as verse 52 states: "He advanced in grace with God and man." This does not mean that Jesus advanced in interior holiness, for in Him was the plenitude of grace. He advanced in a two-fold manner: in the greatness of the works performed by reason of the grace that was in Him; by the greater merit won by these works. By reason of the Person who operates, all the works of Christ are of equal merit, for it is one and the same Divine Person who performs these works; by reason of the work performed there is not this equality, for a greater work is more meritorious.

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twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, according to the custom of the feast; (43) and having fulfilled the days, as they returned the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not. (44) But thinking that he was in the company, they came a day's journey, and sought him

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### *Jesus Among the Doctors. II, 41-51*

The Law of Moses commanded all men to go to Jerusalem and attend the Temple worship three times a year. In the month of Nisan, the first month of spring, was celebrated the feast of the Pasch. Fifty days later, during the month of Sivan, was the feast of Harvest, also called Pentecost. In late fall, during the month of Tishri, was celebrated the feast of Tabernacles. It would seem that in later years the Law commanding the three visits was modified and the obligation considered fulfilled if a visit was paid each year on one of the three feasts.

St. Luke tells us that Joseph and Mary went every year for the feast of the Pasch. He mentions only this one feast because he is describing something which took place during the feast. Women were not obliged to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem; yet Mary accompanied Joseph each year. Though it is not mentioned that Jesus went to the Temple each year, this would seem to follow from the fact that both Joseph and Mary went each year. From the mention of the age of Jesus, it does not follow that this was His first visit to the Temple. For St. Luke does not state that when Jesus was twelve years old He accompanied them; but that on that particular visit, made when He was twelve, He remained in Jerusalem.

The feast of the Pasch began on the evening of the 14th of Nisan and continued seven days. These are the days which Joseph and Mary are said to have fulfilled. When they departed for their home, Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem without their knowledge.

among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. (45) And not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem seeking him. (46) And it came to pass that, after three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. (47) And all that heard him were astonished at his wisdom and answers. (48) And when they saw him they wondered; and his mother said to

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Jesus acted thus perhaps that they might not endeavor to dissuade Him, and that He might not appear to disobey them. In the life of Jesus we must distinguish two classes of acts: (1) Those which He had in common with other children, among which was obedience; (2) Those which were peculiar and proper to Him as the Redeemer. In the former, He was subject to Mary and Joseph; in the latter He was subject to the Heavenly Father alone. In thus remaining behind in Jerusalem, Jesus showed no disregard for Mary and Joseph; but taught that every consideration must give way to the Will of God.

It was customary for the people of one neighborhood to join together and form a caravan, or pilgrimage. The men and women usually formed two separate groups as the caravan moved on its way; at times the women and older men rode, while the younger men and the children walked. In the confusion of the starting both Mary and Joseph would think that the Child Jesus was with the other. His absence was not noted till late in the day when the families gathered together for the night. When Mary and Joseph met, each discovered that Jesus was not with the other; and they began a diligent search among their relatives and friends. Not finding Him, they retraced their steps to Jerusalem. The return journey was the second day of their search; and on the third day they found Him in the Temple.

Jesus had spent these days in the Temple, sitting among the doctors of the law. During the feast, the halls of the Temple were turned into auditoriums whither the Jews came to listen to the discourses of their learned men and to seek

him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. (49) And he said to them: How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business? (50) And they understood not the word that he spoke to them.

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an answer to their questions and difficulties. Jesus sat in the midst of them hearing them and asking them questions. We are not told what the subject of the Lord's questions was; most likely they concerned the thought that was uppermost in the minds of the people: The Messiah. In reply to the questions put to Him by the doctors of the law, Jesus answered with such wisdom that all present were filled with astonishment and were amazed at the wisdom shown forth by Him.

Joseph and Mary wondered at seeing Jesus in the midst of this learned assembly. They wondered why He had done this without their knowledge; they wondered that He should thus display His higher nature. Mary, prompted by her mother love, and by the sorrow caused by the absence of Jesus, asks why He had done so. *Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.* She places Joseph first, because he was the head of the Holy Family; she speaks of him according to the popular estimation of the time. It would have been out of place for her to proclaim the miracle of the Virgin Birth at this time.

Jesus, in reply, speaks of the Heavenly Father and indicates the reason for His action: *Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?* According to the constant interpretation of the Fathers and of Catholic exegetes and theologians, it is in the strict literal sense that Jesus here attributes to God the title of Father. The fact is undeniable, and it is impossible to understand why one should not give the title, in this passage, the value it so frequently has in subsequent parts of the Gospel. Jesus proclaims Himself

(51) And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and was subject to them. And his mother kept all these words in her heart. (52) And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and grace with God and man.

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the Son of God. Mary had mentioned Christ's foster-father; He repeats the title Father, but in a loftier sense, the only sense that corresponds to the facts as St. Luke has taught all through his account. The reason for His act was the Will of the Father; this was the guiding motive of His life and work, and to it does He frequently refer (cf. Jo. iv, 34; v, 30; vi, 38; Mt. ii, 10; vii, 12; xxvi, 42).

Afterwards Jesus returned with them to Nazareth. His life for the next eighteen years is described by St. Luke in a single but significant sentence: *He was subject to them.* The Son of God shows reverence, respect, submission to His creatures; a powerful example of obedience and humility to children and to all men! *His mother kept all these words in her heart*, meditating on the new revelations that were made to her. Thus St. Luke again makes grateful mention of her from whom he learned many of the facts recorded in the history of the Hidden Life. (The final statement of verse 52 has been treated above, on verse 40.)

### *Chapter III*

(1) Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip his brother tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch

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#### *The Mission of St. John. III, 1-20*

The importance of the Mission of St. John is attested by the fact that all four Gospels dwell upon it at some length: Mt. iii, 1-12; Mk. i, 2-8; Jo. i, 6-7, 19-38. This importance lies in the relation of St. John to Jesus, as His precursor; in the person of St. John, as a witness to the truth; in his relation to the people, as a prophet sent them from God. St. Luke brings the mission of St. John into relation with the history of the world, the wording of the text (v. 2) showing that he is dating the beginning of John's mission. He gives the date, the mission and preaching of St. John; his testimony to Christ; and immediately adds how the mission was ended.

THE TIME (1-2). St. Luke first mentions the supreme ruler in the Empire. He was Tiberius Caesar, the son of Claudius Nero and Livia. The latter obtained a divorce and married Augustus; and thus Tiberius was introduced into the imperial family. He was made co-regent, with charge of the Provinces, by Augustus in 764 A.U.C. (A.D. 11), and became sole Emperor at the death of Augustus, three years later. St. Luke counts the years of his reign from his co-regency, when his authority was felt in the Provinces. The fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius is 26-27 A.D.

Pontius Pilate was Governor (strictly, Procurator) of Judea, the highest representative of the Roman government

in Palestine. Herod the Great had divided his kingdom between his three sons: Archelaus, Herod Antipas and Philip (the younger). Archelaus received Judea and Samaria. On the complaint of the Jews, he was deposed in 6 A.D. and the territory over which he ruled was attached to the Province of Syria. The representative of the Emperor was a Procurator, or Deputy Governor. Pilate was the fifth of these Procurators, holding office from 25 to 36 A.D.

Herod was Tetrarch of Galilee. He is Herod Antipas who received, as his share of the kingdom, the two districts of Galilee and Perea. The title *Tetrarch* was originally used in its literal sense of a ruler of a fourth part, e.g., of one of the four parts of Thessaly. In the days of St. Luke it was used to designate the ruler of any division or part of a country, and also any ruler who was not a king. Herod was deposed by Caligula in 39 A.D.

Philip, the brother of Herod Antipas, is also known as "the younger," to distinguish him from the elder Philip, whose wife Antipas took in unlawful union. At the death of Herod the Great, Philip received the regions of Itruria and Trachonitis, the country beyond the Jordan between Syria and Perea. He ruled over this district till his death in 33 or 34 A.D.

Lysanius was Tetrarch of Abilene. This country lies north of Palestine proper. This Lysanius is the great-grandson of Lysanius, king of Chalchis, who was murdered at the instance of Cleopatra in 34 B.C. It was the fashion of rationalists in past years to accuse St. Luke of an error, claiming that he had placed in Abilene a man who was murdered 60 years previous to the present time. But coins and inscriptions most positively attest the existence of this Lysanius at the time when John began his mission. At the death of Lysanius, this territory was given to Herod Agrippa I, and came under the rule of the Herods. This may be the reason why St. Luke mentions the territory.

of Abilene, (2) under the high priest Annas and Caiphas, the word of God was made unto John, the son of Zachary, in the desert. (3) And he came into all the country about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of penance for the remission

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From the political rulers, St. Luke passes to the religious superiors of Palestine: *Under the High Priest Annas and Caiphas*. From the very beginning, the Law enacted that there should be but one High Priest; and even under the foreign rule, when the office became the prize of the highest bidder and High Priests were named and deposed at the pleasure of civil authorities, there were never two in possession of the office at the same time. Neither does St. Luke say there were two High Priests; but, as we have translated literally, Annas and Caiphas were "High Priest." Annas, the elder of the two, was appointed to the office by Quirinius in 7 A.D., and deposed by Gratus in the year 14. Caiphas was appointed to the office by Gratus in the year 18. Annas is called High Priest, because he had once held the office. But this is not the reason why St. Luke here mentions him, naming him and Caiphas under one title. Annas was the father-in-law of Caiphas, over whom he exercised great influence; he was regarded by the people as possessing greater authority than his son-in-law; and he *de facto* shared in the administration of the office of High Priest. Both these men were free-thinking Sadducees, who had bought the office from the Gentiles, and were more concerned with promoting their own interests than the worship of God. Israel was indeed a flock without a shepherd.

Under such circumstances the word of God *was made unto John*. This is the Old Testament formula for inspiration and revelation and was used in regard to the Prophets when they received their divine commission to teach. At an early age St. John retired into the desert to prepare himself for his mission; and from this retreat God now calls him.



of sins, (4) as it is written in the book of the sayings of Isaias the prophet: A voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.

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THE MISSION OF ST. JOHN (3-6). Although St. John began his preaching in the desert, according to Matthew, and later preached and baptized outside this area, we are not to understand *all the country about the Jordan* (v. 3) in the sense that he traversed the entire districts of Judea, Samaria and Perea. He confined his preaching to the Jordan valley, from the Dead Sea to the Lake of Genesareth. In the words, *preaching the baptism of penance*, is given the theme of his preaching and mission. It is worthy of note that John, Jesus and the Apostles began their missions with the same admonition to penance (cf. Mt. iii, 2; iv, 17; Mk. i, 14; Ac. ii, 37-38). Penance, reparation for past sin and separation from the sinful things of the world and the flesh, is the first requisite for the entry to the Kingdom of God. The baptism, preached and administered by St. John, was an exterior sign and manifestation of this penance and change of heart. Its purpose was to arouse the recipient to complete conversion, to resolution of amendment and expiation of the faults of the past. The baptism of John did not, of itself, remit sin; it represented an effect wrought by the Sacrament of Baptism, as later instituted by Christ.

All four Gospels state that the mission of St. John was a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaias (xl, 3-5). This prophecy is quoted freely from the Septuagint by St. Luke, in verses 4-6. Isaias speaks directly of the return of the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity; indirectly, as stated in the Gospels, of the deliverance of mankind from the captivity of sin and Satan. The metaphorical language used in the prophecy is easily understood. He contemplates the return of the captives; at their head is God, their King and Liberator; a herald precedes Him according to the ancient

(5) Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight and the rough ways plain; (6) and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

(7) He said therefore to the multitudes that went forth to be baptized by him: You offspring of vipers, who hath

custom of the East, announcing His coming and calling on all to prepare the highways, so that there may be no obstacles to His advance.

Indirectly, and in a higher sense, the prophecy refers to the mission of St. John. He is sent as the herald to proclaim the coming of the Messias, the King and Liberator, and to admonish the people to remove all that might impede his progress. And thus he designates himself as "a voice of one crying in the wilderness" (Jo. i, 23). As a king is preceded by one who prepares the way before him, so also is the Messias preceded by one who prepares the minds and hearts of men for His coming. This is the general sense of the prophecy as applied to St. John. In the metaphor used by the prophet there are mentioned four obstacles in the way of the king's advance. A diversity of opinion exists as to how these natural impediments are to be applied to the moral order. An application that recommends itself is: The *valleys* are a figure of the lack of moral strength and courage; the *mountains and hills*, of pride and ambition; the *crooked* way, of unrestrained passion and desire; the *rough*, of coldness and hardness of heart, hatred and ill-will.

The quotation of the prophecy closes with the words: *All flesh shall see the salvation of God*, i.e., the salvation which God prepares and offers. The phrase is Hebraistic and means that salvation shall be made known and offered to all men.

PREACHING OF ST. JOHN (7-17). To the multitudes in general (Matthew: to the Pharisees in particular),

shown you to flee from the wrath to come? (8) Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of penance; and do not begin to say within yourselves: We have Abraham for our father. For I say to you that God is able of the stones to raise

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St. John preaches penance and the wrath to come upon those who fail to amend their lives. *Offspring of vipers*, designates them, not their forebears, as the most poisonous of serpents. The comparison is made because of their cunning, deceit and hypocrisy (cf. Mt. xxiii, 33). St. John noted the hypocrisy of many who came to him, especially the Pharisees. They listened to him but did not believe; but they feared to oppose him openly because of the high esteem in which he was held by the people (cf. Lk. xx, 4). He asks who *hath shown you*, i.e., who can show you, persuade you, of the need of penance and thus enable you to escape the wrath to come? It was an accepted opinion of the scribes and Pharisees that judgment would be pronounced against the Gentiles alone at the coming of the Messiah. John dissipates this view by his question which declares that they are in like danger.

Because of this danger of the judgment, St. John calls upon them to bring forth fruits worthy of penance. If they are sincere they will do penance; nor is there any excuse for their lack of penance. One excuse is declared of no avail: *Do not begin to say within yourselves: We have Abraham for our father.* They harbored the idea that, because of their descent from Father Abraham, they had a strict right and claim upon the Kingdom of God and that none of them could be excluded. Thus St. Justin refers to this belief: "Your teachers say the eternal kingdom will be given to those who are of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, even though they be sinners, and unfaithful and untrue to God" (c. Tryph.). True, the promises were made to Abraham and his seed; but these promises were conditional upon the possession of the faith and works of Abraham; "all are

up children to Abraham. (9) And even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire. (10) And the multitudes asked him, saying: What, then, must we do? (11) And he answering, said to them: He that hath two coats, let him give to him that hath none; and he

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not Israelites who are of Israel, neither are all they that are of the seed of Abraham children" (Rom. ix, 6). God had no need of them in order to carry out His designs, for He is *able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham*. This figure is used to stress the omnipotence of God and His absolute independence of man; He is able to transform the most unlikely subjects into heirs of the Kingdom.

Each man shall stand or fall on his own merits, for *now the axe is laid to the root of the tree*. This figure is to be understood and interpreted according to the language of Sacred Scripture. In the Scriptures, man is frequently compared to a tree (v.g., Is. v, 7; Jer. ii, 21). Many favors had been granted to this Vineyard of the Lord; and they were chosen because they were the seed of Abraham. But mere carnal descent avails nothing; for each tree and plant in the Vineyard is to be judged. This judgment is to begin at once, for the axe is now laid to the root of the tree, ready to strike. Every tree therefore that does not bear fruit of its own shall be cut down and cast into the fire, a conclusion easily understood from what has preceded.

Many sought instruction from St. John. The people who were anxious to know how they might bring forth worthy fruits of penance, asked what they should do. In reply, St. John insists upon the practice of charity, recommending two corporal works of mercy. Clothing and food are the most common and necessary wants of man. The people are advised to share their superfluities of food and clothing with those in need. The advice is both a command and a coun-

that hath food, let him do in like manner. (12) And the publicans also came to be baptized, and said to him: Master, what ought we do? (13) But he said to them: Exact no more than that which is appointed you. (14) And the soldiers also asked him, saying: And what ought we do? And

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sel; a command that they practice active charity, and a counsel that they likewise do this in a spirit of penance.

Publicans also came for instruction (12-13). The publicans were tax-gatherers. The system of taxation, especially in the Provinces, was one that imposed intolerable burdens on the people and opened the door to all manner of injustice and fraud. The Roman government sold or leased the taxes of a district to certain men who were called *Publicani*; these in turn hired others to collect the tax. These latter, called *Potitores*, are generally meant when the Gospels speak of the publicans. The *Publicani* and their subordinates were universally hated and detested because of their dishonesty and extortion. But they were especially held in abhorrence by the Jews; for, besides the evil practices, they gathered tax for a foreign power. St. John does not command the publicans to seek other employment; neither does he declare that the payment of tax is unjust. He commands that they avoid the vice to which their occupation exposed them. *Exact no more than is appointed*, i.e., demand no more than the just tax; avoid dishonesty and extortion.

Certain soldiers were attracted to John. He does not condemn their calling, but points out certain vices and crimes to which they were exposed and which they must avoid in order to enter the Kingdom of the Messiah. *Do violence to no man*, i.e., from private motives. They are not to use their position to intimidate and oppress the people. Some have thought that John hereby condemns their calling; but this is not the case, since the third member

he said to them: Do violence to no man, neither falsely accuse any man; and be content with your pay.

(15) And as the people were in expectation and were thinking in their hearts of John whether he himself might

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of his advice supposes that they continue as soldiers. *Neither falsely accuse*, a common practice for the purpose of obtaining money; what we now call blackmail. *Be content with your pay*, as generally understood, they are not to rebel against authority, discontent with wages being the frequent cause of such action. However, we understand this is something positive. Violence and false accusation had as their purpose the extortion of money; as a means to avoid these acts, he advises them to be content with their pay.

TESTIMONY TO CHRIST (15-17). The second duty of John, as the Precursor, was to give testimony to Christ.

The testimony, as given in Luke, is also recorded in Mt. iii, 11-12 and Mk. i, 7-8, where it is given as part of the Baptist's preaching. In the Fourth Gospel there are two distinct testimonies: i, 19-27 and i, 29-34. It is obvious that St. John spoke of the Messiah on many occasions, for his Mission demanded this. The testimony given in the first three Gospels was made before Jesus came to be baptized. After the baptism and before the return from the desert, a deputation came from the Great Council and to them St. John gives testimony (Jo. i, 19-27), in almost the same words as to the people; and again, he gives testimony to the facts which occurred at the baptism (Jo. i, 29-34).

St. Luke remarks, by way of introduction to the testimony of St. John, that *the people were in expectation*, i.e., looking for the Messiah, and thinking that perhaps John might be he. The reason for this opinion on part of the people was St. John's character and evident sanctity, as also the fact that he came after the voice of prophecy had been silent for more than 400 years in Israel. Furthermore, the Jews considered baptism as proper to the Messiah, or at least of

be the Christ, (16) John answered, saying to all: I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire. (17) Whose

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Messianic times. This was based upon the prophecies, v.g., Ez. xxxvi, 25; Zach. xiii, 1. Hence, the question of the Great Council: "Why dost thou baptize if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, nor the prophet?" (Jo. i, 25).

St. John does not deny that his baptism has anything to do with the Messiah; but he declares that he is not the Messiah. He makes use of the people's high regard for him to lead them to Christ. They think that he is someone great, even the Messiah; yet, he tells them there is a greater than he to come, *the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to loose*. The duty of caring for the master's shoes was allotted to the lowest and meanest of slaves. St. John declares that he is such in comparison to the Messiah. He likewise declares the superiority of the baptism which Christ is to administer: *I indeed baptize you with water. . . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire*. The baptism of John was in water alone, a mere external rite and ceremony, a sign that the recipient was penitent, and did not confer grace of itself. The baptism of Christ is a Sacrament, an external sign which confers grace upon the recipient, a means of salvation and sanctification, filling the soul with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit and operating as a warming and consuming fire. This declaration of St. John is also a declaration that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as foretold by the prophets (v.g., Ez. xxxix, 29; Joel ii, 28) is to be fulfilled. The term *fire* in connection with the Baptism of Christ is to be understood as the purifying and enkindling of the soul by the Holy Spirit (St. Chrysostom). For Matthew uses the terms "Holy Spirit" and "fire" as synonymous; the descent of the Holy Spirit in

winnowing-shovel is in his hand to purge his threshing floor; and he will gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.

(18) And many other things exhorting, did he preach to the people. (19) But Herod the tetrarch, when he was re-proved by him for Herodias his brother's wife and for all

the form of fiery tongues represented an effect of His coming; Christ speaks of His baptism as of water and the Holy Spirit; the prophets compare the action of the Holy Ghost to a purifying fire.

Besides being the source of sanctification, Jesus is also the Judge of mankind. This is expressed in the metaphore of the *threshing floor*. The threshing floor consisted of a hardened circular area upon which the grain was strewn and beaten with flails or trodden by oxen. The corn or wheat was then separated from the chaff by means of the winnowing-shovel. This instrument was used to cast the grain against the wind, the chaff being carried away and the grain falling back to the floor. The application is easy: the *wheat and the chaff* are the good and the wicked; the *winnowing-shovel*, the judgment; the *barn*, Heaven, into which the good are gathered; the *fire*, Hell.

CLOSE OF ST. JOHN'S MISSION (18-20). St. Luke, having described how St. John fulfilled his mission, indicates that he does not give all that St. John did and said (v. 18). He gives a summary. The period of John's mission is uncertain. The more common view is that he began to preach towards the end of 26 A.D.; that Jesus came to be baptized by him the following spring; that John continued to preach some time longer and, after a year's imprisonment, was put to death.

St. John was cast into prison by Herod Antipas when *he reprovved him for Herodias, his brother's wife*. The union between Antipas and Herodias was sinful, incestuous and



the evils which Herod had done, (20) he added this also to all the rest, he shut up John in prison.

(21) Now it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened, (22) and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily

adulterous: They were uncle and niece, brother and sister-in-law, both divorced and their former consorts still living. For this scandalous union and *for all the evils which Herod had done*, St. John fearlessly condemned him.

### *Baptism of Jesus.* III, 21-22

The baptism of Jesus by St. John is also recorded in Mt. iii, 13-17 and Mk. i, 9-11. The three accounts are in perfect agreement as to the principal facts; Mt. gives a brief conversation between Jesus and John before the baptism.

Why was Jesus baptized? The first reason is that given by Jesus Himself: "It behooveth us to fulfil all justice" (Mt. iii, 15). Justice means virtue, also the Old Law, which John was to bring to a close as its last representative. To Jesus it meant that, being born under the Law, He should fulfil all its precepts until He had established the New Law. If it be urged that the baptism of John was not a part of the Law, we may reply that it was a command of God and a precept promulgated through the Prophet John for this particular time. A second reason was, that Jesus might be made known to John as the Messiah (cf. Jo. i, 32-34). Thirdly, though Jesus was absolutely stainless, He took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh and was baptized in the place of others (Op. Imp.). Many of the Fathers also see here a consecration or dedication of water (not the Jordan), for the future Sacrament; a thought that is contained in the ceremony for the blessing of baptismal water.

**JESUS, THE MESSIAS AND SON OF GOD (22).** St. Luke, like the other Evangelists, remarks very briefly the fact of the baptism of Jesus. They are more concerned with the manifestation that took place. When Jesus was baptized and praying, *the heaven was opened*, i.e., a rift ap-

form like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven: Thou art My Son, My Beloved One; in thee I am well pleased.

(23) And Jesus himself was beginning, about thirty years of age, being the son, as was supposed, of Joseph, who was of

peared in the clouds or firmament, from which the Voice was heard and the Holy Spirit was seen. From the wording of the Gospels we are to conclude that this manifestation was seen by Jesus and John alone. If others were present, God withheld it from their sight as He withheld the vision from the companions of St. Paul on the road to Damascus. The Gospels also insist on the reality and objectivity of the manifestation; it was not a mental but an ocular vision.

The Holy Ghost manifested His presence in a *bodily shape like a dove*. The dove is the figure of faithfulness and peace (Gen. xiii, 11), a symbol of innocence and pure love (Can. i, 14); and Jesus speaks of its candor and simplicity (Mt. x, 16). The manifestation showed forth the dispositions required for baptism, the effects of baptism and the gifts of the Holy Spirit (St. Thomas). The Heavenly Father also bore testimony, saying: *Thou art My Son, My Beloved One; in thee I am well pleased*.

The first phrase of this sentence, both from the wording of the text and the context, declares Jesus to be the Son of God in the strict, literal sense. We have endeavored to reproduce the strength of the double article in the Greek, which singles out Jesus as the Son of God in a particular and special manner, distinct from all others. The second phrase we understand as in the hymn of the angels at the birth of Christ. In and through Jesus is the Good-will of God shown towards men in a most excellent degree. Thus does the Heavenly Father declare that Jesus is the Son of God and the Messias.

Heli, who was of Matthat, (24) who was of Levi, who was of Melchi, who was of Janne, who was of Joseph, (25) who was of Mathathias, who was of Amos, who was of Nahum, who was of Esli, who was of Naggai, (26) who was of Maath,

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*The Genealogy.* III, 23-38

St. Luke introduces the Genealogy with a statement of the age of Jesus. The principal clause of the sentence is: *And Jesus was beginning*, i.e., He was beginning His Public Ministry, διδάσκειν being understood with ἀρχόμενος. For this use of the word, compare Ac. i, 22 and Mk. iv, 1. The Mission of Jesus, as Messiah, begins publicly after the Heavenly Father designates Him as such. The phrase cannot be understood as meaning that Jesus was beginning to be about thirty years of age; for we do not speak of a person beginning to be of an indefinite age. Neither does it mean that Jesus was in His thirtieth year; for one does not begin a definite year when he is about that age. *About thirty years*, is in apposition to Jesus; and means that at the beginning of the Public Ministry, He was about thirty years of age. To guard against any misunderstanding, to correct the false idea of the people, and to declare again the Virgin Birth, St. Luke states that Jesus was the supposed son of Joseph: *the son, as was supposed*, of Joseph. *Joseph was of Heli*, i.e., in the family line here traced, Joseph succeeded to Heli, by birth, by adoption, or as an heir. The verse then means: When Jesus began His Ministry, He was about thirty years old, reputed to be the son of Joseph, who was of Heli, etc.

Other interpretations of the verse have been advanced. One has been shown to be false, viz., that Jesus was exactly thirty years of age at this time. It has been suggested to introduce a parenthetical clause, so that the verse would read: "Jesus was (beginning, etc.) of Heli." But this introduces a cumbersome construction, with a whole series

who was of Mathathias, who was of Semei, who was of Joseph, who was of Juda, (27) who was of Joannan, who was of Resa, who was of Zorobabel, who was of Salathiel, who was of Neri, (28) who was of Melchi, who was of Addi, who was of Cozan, who was of Elmodam, who was of Her, (29) who was of Jesus, who was of Eliezer, who was of Jorim, who was of Mathat, who was of Levi, (30) who was of Simeon, who was of Juda, who was of Joseph, who was of Jonam, who was of Eliakim, (31) who was of Melea, who was of Menna, who was of Matatha, who was of Nathan, who was of David, (32) who was of Jesse, who was of Obed, who was of Booz, who was of Salmon, who was of Naasson,

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of appositional clauses in parenthesis. It has also been suggested that we read: "Being the son (as was supposed of Joseph) of Heli." But such a construction is not likely; for then "son" has two different meanings in the same usage, and the absence of the article before Joseph, in the Greek text, cannot be explained. The natural reading is the one we have given.

St. Luke traces the genealogy from Joseph to David; to Abraham; to Adam, the father of the human race. The series of names from Joseph to Nathan, exclusively (23-31), are not found elsewhere in the Sacred Scriptures. Nathan, the son of David, did not succeed to the throne; and this seems to be the reason why the descent of this branch of the family of David is not contained in the Old Testament. The names in this series could be learned from existing records, either public or private, for the ancient Jews were careful in preserving their family trees. The series of names from Nathan to Abraham, both inclusive (31-34), are also found in the same order in I Par. i, 34; ii, 1-15; Ruth iv, 18 ff. The names from Abraham to Adam (33-38) are found in Gen. v, 4 ff.; xi, 10 ff.; I Par. i.

St. Matthew, in the beginning of his Gospel, likewise gives a Genealogy, starting with Abraham. In both, the

(33) who was of Aminadab, who was of Aram, who was of Esron, who was of Phares, who was of Juda, (34) who was of Jacob, who was of Isaac, who was of Abraham, who was of Thare, who was of Nachor, (35) who was of Sarug, who was of Ragau, who was of Phaleg, who was of Heber, who was of Sale, (36) who was of Cainan, who was of Arphaxad, who was of Sem, who was of Lamech, (37) who was of Mathusala, who was of Henoch, who was of Jared, who was of Malaleel, who was of Cainan, (38) who was of Henos, who was of Seth, who was of Adam, who was of God.

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series of names from Abraham to David is identical; from David to Joseph, they are totally different. On the difficulty arising therefrom, see Appendix II.

## Chapter IV

(1) And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert (2) during forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing in those days; and when they were ended, he was hungry. (3) And the devil said to him: If thou be the

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### *The Fast and Temptation. IV, 1-13*

The fast and temptation are also recorded in Mt. iv. 1-11 and in Mk. i, 12-13. The latter summarizes, merely mentioning the fact of the fast, the temptation and ministry by the angels. There is little difference between the accounts of Mt. and Lk., except the order in which the temptations are given. This will be treated later.

THE FAST (1-2). The three Gospels connect the fast closely with the baptism of Jesus. Matthew: "Then Jesus was led"; Mark: "And immediately the Spirit drove Him into the desert"; Luke: *And Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from the Jordan.* The same Holy Ghost, who had come upon Him at the baptism, led Him in the desert. This leading was an inward motion, a holy desire, awakened in the soul of Jesus. His human nature, which was the instrument of His Divinity and of the Holy Spirit, followed this inspiration and internal voice of the Spirit. Very likely the desert here mentioned is the Wilderness of Judea. According to tradition, going back to the time of the Crusades, the scene of the Lord's fast was at Djebel Kuruntal, "Mount of Quarantana."

During the forty days in the desert Jesus observed an absolute fast. *He ate nothing in those days*, acquainted the

Gentile readers of the Gospel with the fact that the fast was absolute, and not partial. For the Jews, fasting was always absolute, but ended with sundown. Hence, Matthew says that the fast included nights as well as days. In memory of the forty days' fast and in imitation of the Savior, the Church has instituted the season of Lent.

**THE TEMPTATION (3-13).** After the forty days' fast, Jesus was tempted by the devil. Having taken upon Himself human nature, He did not exempt Himself from the trials which human nature must bear; and so He underwent temptation, the severest trial to which man is subjected. He wished also to give His followers courage in the time of temptation and teach them that, with His aid and following His example, they also may overcome. Jesus came to destroy the power of Satan. As Adam met and was overcome by Satan, the new Head of the human race meets and overcomes him in a personal conflict.

What was the order of the temptations? The question is occasioned by the fact that St. Luke places second the temptation which Mt. places third. There is here no contradiction; for both record the three temptations after the fast. It is more probable that Mt. gives the real sequence. St. Luke uses no word indicative of the sequence, connecting the three temptations and the various parts of the event with the particle "and." As it were, he states the fact of the temptations, and then enumerates them. On the other hand, Mt. seems to stress the sequence, connecting the temptations and various parts of the event with such words as "then" and "again." Secondly, the temptation on the mountain is the most violent of the three. Finally, Mt. states the command of Jesus that Satan withdraw after this temptation.

The first temptation (3-4) took place in the desert. Jesus was weakened by the forty days' fast. Satan adapts the temptation to the condition and the character of the one against whom he comes. Approaching Jesus in visible form,

Son of God, say to this stone that it be made bread. (4) And Jesus answered him: It is written: Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word of God. (5) And the devil led him into a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, (6) and said to him: To

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for the accounts clearly show that the temptations were external, he proposes that Jesus appease His hunger by working a miracle. In introducing the temptation, Satan calls attention to the character of Jesus and to the miraculous power which he supposes Him to possess. *If thou be the Son of God*, expresses a doubt and an insinuation; it expresses a desire of proving the existence of this power in Jesus. The temptation is to pride and vanity; Jesus is asked to work a miracle, not only to satisfy His hunger but also to show forth his power. There is also a suggestion of diffidence in Divine Providence, who had brought Him into the desert. In reply, Jesus makes no statement as to whether or not He is the Son of God; for to deny it would have been false, to assert it would have been to satisfy the curiosity of Satan and yield to him in a certain measure. Jesus absolutely and radically repulses the tempter. He makes no distinction of any kind, enters into no argument, but declares what God has said. *It is written*, is the formula for quoting the Scriptures, and these are the Word of God. Jesus quotes Dt. viii, 3. The sense of the passage, as quoted by Jesus, is that God could provide for Him in the desert and that He, Jesus, would rely upon Him. It is an expression of confidence in God, upon which naturally follows the temptation to presumption, given in the second place by Matthew but third by Luke.

The scene of the second temptation (Mt.: the third) is a high mountain (5-8). Having brought Jesus to the mountain, Satan shows Jesus *all the kingdoms of the world*, i.e., the existing kingdoms at that time. Matthew makes the rep-



thee will I give all this power and the glory of them; for to me it is delivered and to whom I will, I give it. (7) If therefore thou wilt adore me, all shall be thine. (8) And Jesus answered and said to him: It is written: Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (9) And he brought him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of

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resentation more vivid by adding: "And the glory of them." Since this representation took place *in a moment of time*, it seems that Satan, by some magical power, formed images of these kingdoms before the eyes of Jesus; and to make the deception more real, placed Him on a mountain. Satan then promises to give all this power and glory to Jesus. It is a temptation to avarice and ambition. Satan seems to be convinced that Jesus is the Messias, of whom it was said that He should be a great King and receive the world as an inheritance; and he would propose an easy means of obtaining this kingdom. He endeavors to strengthen his promise by declaring the world was given to him to dispose of at his will. In this Satan lied; he claims a dominion which he does not possess. He is the prince of this world (Jo. xiv, 30), and he exercises a great influence for evil. He rules over the sinful and the unbelieving; but even here he does not possess the absolute power he claims. As a condition upon which he grants his favors, Satan demands adoration, a recognition of his dominion and authority. Jesus again repels the tempter by quoting the Word of God: *Thou shalt adore the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve.* Jesus gives the sense, not the mere words, of Dt. vi, 13. In this verse it is declared that man owes an entire and absolute service to God, a worship that excludes every other being. There can be no compromise between vice and virtue, between good and evil, between God and Satan.

The third temptation (Mt.: the second) takes place in

the temple, and said to him: If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence; (10) for it is written: He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; (11) and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone. (12) And Jesus answering, said to him: It is said: Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

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Jerusalem whither Satan brought Jesus (9-12). Opinions differ as to the manner in which Satan brought Jesus to Jerusalem. The text demands an actual transportation; and such an act of diabolical power is possible if God permits it. "We need not be surprised if He permitted Himself to be carried by Satan, since He permitted Himself to be crucified by the members of Satan" (St. Gregory M.). Satan placed Jesus upon *the pinnacle of the Temple*, which was not a tower or turret, for the Temple had none, but the highest part of the buildings. Looking down from the heights, Satan suggests that Jesus cast Himself down. The idea is so evidently foolish that he endeavors to make it sound reasonable by quoting from Ps. xc, 11. But he misrepresents and misinterprets. In the Psalm quoted God promises to protect His faithful servants from danger and from the snares of the devil; but He does not promise to protect man if he exposes himself to danger without necessity and through motives of vanity; He does not promise to work miracles to protect and save the foolhardy. The temptation is to presumption, to test the truthfulness of the promise of God. Jesus again repels the temptation without discussing what is right or wrong in the suggestion; He sees only the evil involved and its contradiction to the Word of God. He quotes the sense of Dt. vi, 16, saying: *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*. Jesus does not here declare Himself God; He quotes the Law that forbade tempting, i.e., putting the Word of God to a test. While man must have absolute trust in Divine Providence, he may not put it to a

(13) And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a time.

(14) And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee; and the fame of him went throughout all the country. (15) And he taught in their synagogues, being magnified by all.

test; he may not expose himself to temptation or danger without cause, and then expect God to come to his aid by working miracles.

St. Luke closes the account of the temptations by stating that Satan departed from him *for a time*. We are not told whether Satan came against Him personally at a later time. But he did attack Jesus through others (cf. Lk. xxii, 28; xxii, 3; Jo. xiv, 30).

#### *Jesus Preaches in Nazareth. IV, 14-30.*

Parallels, in part, are Mt. xiii, 53-58 and Mk. vi, 1-6. It is doubtful whether St. Luke refers to the same visit as the other two Gospels. If they be the same, then St. Luke has placed the visit out of historical sequence and at the beginning of the Ministry in Galilee in order to show the effect of our Lord's teaching in Nazareth. It seems more probable that he unites the account of two visits. Mt. iv, 13 states that Jesus came to Nazareth and went immediately to Capharnaum. Thus both Mt. and Lk. place a visit of Jesus to this village at the beginning of the Ministry; Mt. and Mk., in the passages noted above, mention a second visit when the people rejected Jesus. St. Luke unites the two.

Verses 14 and 15 form, as it were, an introduction to the Ministry in Galilee. *The power of the Spirit* had been manifested at the first visit to Galilee after the baptism (Jo. ii, 1-12) and at Jerusalem during the feast of the Pasch (Jo. ii, 13-36), because of which the Galileans received Him when he returned (Jo. iv, 45). The mention of His

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(16) And he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up; and he went into the synagogue, as was his custom, on the sabbath day; and he stood up to read. (17) And the book of Isaias the prophet was handed unto him. And he unfolded the book and found the place where it was written:

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fame spreading through the whole country may be made by anticipation.

When Jesus came to Nazareth, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath. The reference to *His custom*, is to the years that He spent in Nazareth, where He was brought up. During these years Jesus attended the services of the synagogue together with His fellow-townsmen. During the service in the synagogue anyone might be asked to read from the Sacred Scriptures or to address the assembly, if thought capable of doing so (cf. Ac. xiii, 15). In the synagogal service a lesson from the Law was first read and interpreted, then a lesson from the Prophets, after which a sermon was delivered. Here Jesus was both reader and preacher. The text of the Gospel seems to indicate that Jesus volunteered for the reading from the Prophets. Isaias had been selected for the reading that day. Jesus *unfolded the book*, which was a strip of parchment attached to a roller, and not the bound books of our times. His *finding the place* shows that He did not read at random the first passage that met His eyes, but selected what He would read. The passage, quoted in verses 18 and 19, is taken from Is. lxi, 1-2. The quotation, as given in the Gospel, is according to the Septuagint version which differs from the Hebrew and also from the Vulgate version of Isaias. The difference is only in wording and not in sense.

The words of Isaias, here quoted referred directly to the Babylonian Captivity and the deliverance of the Jews. In its literal sense it was a message of hope to the captives. In its typical sense, as understood by the Jews and here

(18) The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; wherefore he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart, (19) to proclaim deliverance to the captives and restoration of sight to the blind, to set at

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declared by Jesus, the prophecy foretold the blessing which the Messias would bring.

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*, was especially true of Jesus who was sent with divine authority and was filled with the Holy Spirit. *He hath anointed me to preach*, is interpreted by all ancient commentators as a reference to the descent of the Holy Spirit at the baptism of Jesus (v.g., Sts. Irenaeus, Cyprian, Ambrose, Athanasius, Jerome, Augustine). The Holy Spirit was always in Jesus; but He was visibly anointed and designated to the office of Messias through the descent of the Holy Spirit at the baptism. *He hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart*. (cf. Ps. cxlvi, 3). Consolation is to be given to the sorrowful; and the sorrowful, in a special sense, are they who are burdened with sin. In the following members of the prophecy, Isaias speaks of some of the miseries from which the captives shall be delivered; and these, in turn, are typical of the spiritual miseries from which the Messias redeemed mankind.

There is much discussion of the words: *To proclaim deliverance to the captives and restoration of sight to the blind*. The words are in agreement with the Septuagint, which differs from the Hebrew; the Vulgate, and consequently the Douay, give the text of Isaias: "To preach a release to the captives and deliverance to them that are shut up." The Hebrew of Isaias may be literally translated: "to the bound a restoration of sight"; and consequently the Prophet speaks of two classes of captives: Those who were not held in prison and enjoyed a certain amount of liberty; those who were cast into the dungeons of Babylon.

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liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. (20) And he folded the book and gave it back to the minister, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were intently fixed upon him. (21) And he began to say to them: This day is fulfilled this scripture in your

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These later were equivalently blind and can be said to receive their sight (i.e., its use) when they are restored to liberty and the light of day. The difference between Luke and the text of Isaias is a "model difference," i.e., the same truth is expressed in a different manner: Those whom Isaias calls "bound," Luke calls "blind." The application to the Messiah is easily understood. Those who are captives of sin shall be released; those who are in spiritual darkness, blind, shall be brought to the light of truth.

*To set at liberty them that are bruised*, is found in Is. lviii, 6 and not in the 61st chapter, as is the rest of the quotation. The explanations are: Jesus read from the two different chapters, for it was permissible to take passages from two different parts of the Book when reading the Prophets; or St. Luke, speaking of the place "where it is written," found this phrase at this place in the MS. of the Septuagint. The *bruised* are those shattered in fortune and broken in spirit. This state of man in the natural order is an apt figure of the state of a man who has become the victim of sin. *The acceptable year of the Lord*, is the time of liberality and beneficence, the time when the Lord is pleased to shower His benefits upon man. The acceptable year is described in Is. xlix, 8; and St. Paul applies the expression to the times of the Messiah (II Cor. vi, 2). The acceptable "year" is the Messianic Era, which began with Jesus and continues till the end of time. It is the time of grace, redemption and salvation. The purpose of these words is to declare the nature of our Lord's mission, not its duration.

ears. (22) And all bore witness to him and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded from his mouth; and they said: Is not this the son of Joseph? (23) And he said to them: Doubtless you will say to me this parable: Physi-

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When Jesus finished reading and returned the book to the minister, He sat down, according to the custom of the time in preaching. All eyes were fixed upon Him, no doubt out of curiosity as to how He would explain the passage just read, and also out of curiosity concerning one who had been brought up in their midst. The Gospel does not give the sermon of Jesus, but summarizes it in one sentence: *This day is fulfilled this scripture in your ears*. Jesus declares that the time of the Messiah has arrived, that the prophecy was fulfilled in their hearing. The sense: To-day you hear the fulfillment of this prophecy, because you hear Him of whom the prophet spoke.

*All bore witness to Him*, i.e., they agreed that the rumors concerning His power as a preacher were true, having itching ears (cf. II Tim. iv, 3) and being desirous of hearing an eloquent sermon but not of learning the truth. Words that should have won them bore no fruit in their hearts. At once doubts and objections arose in their minds. *Is not this the son of Joseph* they ask in contempt and unbelief; and Matthew adds: "They were scandalized," i.e., they took offense that one whom they considered as of lowly origin should speak thus and make the claim that Jesus made. As the sermon of Jesus was summarized, so also the objection of the people. It may be noted again that St. Luke truthfully and faithfully records the opinion of the people who knew nothing of the Virgin Birth; and when he gives the false opinions of the people, he does not make them his own.

*Physician heal thyself* was a popular saying among the Jews (cf. Tanchum 4, 2) and among the Gentiles (cf. Ovid,

cian, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capharnaum, do also here in thy own country. (24) But he said: Verily I say to you: No prophet is accepted in his own country. (25) Of a truth I say to you: There were many widows in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, when there was a great famine throughout all the land; (26) and to none of them was Elias sent, but only to Sarepta of Sidon, to a widow

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de Re Amat. 216). Jesus had just read and explained the magnificent prophecy of Isaias and declared that He was come to bring this prophecy to fulfillment. The people would use this proverb against Him, telling Him first to better His own state and make His position more secure. And to do this they ask that He work such miracles as they heard He had worked in Capharnaum. They had heard of His fame as a preacher and a worker of miracles. Their curiosity was satisfied as to the first, now they desire a demonstration of the second.

Jesus refuses to work miracles for them, and gives as the reason: *No prophet is accepted in his own country*. The meaning of this saying is that those who are nearest to greatness are the most apt not to appreciate it. The "acceptance" of a prophet means belief in him; and because the people of Nazareth would not believe in Jesus, He worked no miracles. Jesus always demanded faith of those who sought an exercise of His power; not that faith was necessary in order that He exercise these powers, but because He demanded faith as a condition upon which He granted favors. He worked no miracles to satisfy curiosity.

Jesus continues with the citation of two familiar examples from the Old Testament (25-27). The story of Elias and the Gentile woman of Sarepta, a town near Sidon, is given in III Kgs. xvii. During the famine which came upon the land in punishment of the sins of Achab, God commanded



woman. (27) And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, save only Naaman the Syrian. (28) And all in the synagogue, hearing these things, were filled with rage. (29) And they rose up and cast him out of the city, and led him as far as the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. (30) But passing through their midst, he went his way.

(31) And he went down to Capharnaum, a city of Galilee, and there taught them on the sabbath day. (32) And they were astonished at his doctrine; for his speech was with

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Elias to go to the widow of Sarepta. She received the prophet and believed his word that she should not want. In reward, God kept her supplied with food and restored her son to life. The story of Eliseus and Naaman is found in IV Kgs. v. Naaman, a general in the army of Syria, was struck with leprosy. An Israelite maid in the service of his wife bade the general to have recourse to Eliseus. Through faith in the words of the prophet Naaman was cured. Though Jesus did not apply these examples directly to the people of Nazareth, the allusion is too evident to be misunderstood. They had demanded miracles; and in reply Jesus quotes two examples, in which Gentiles received favors in preference to the Israelites. The reason was that the Gentiles possessed faith and were less unworthy than the prophets' own people. So also here; the people of Nazareth are unworthy of receiving these favors because of their lack of faith.

The hearers of Jesus were filled with anger and, rising up against Him, *thrust Him out of the city*, as one worthy of death. They brought Him to the brow of the hill upon which the city was built. Their intention was to cast Him down from the precipice. By an act of His will, a miracle, Jesus renders them powerless and departs from them.

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power. (33) And in the synagogue there was a man who had an unclean demon; and he cried out with a loud voice:

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### *A Sabbath Day in Capharnaum. IV, 31-43*

From Nazareth Jesus went down to Capharnaum. This city lay on the Lake of Genesareth and was the metropolis of Galilee. It was the scene of many of our Lord's works and teaching; and it was the center of His missionary work in Galilee. St. Matthew calls it "His city."

St. Luke makes note of the excellence of the preaching of Jesus: They were astonished at His doctrine; for His speech was with power (cf. Mt. vii, 29). In the present instance, St. Luke describes one of the sabbath days which Jesus spent at Capharnaum. Upon this day, Jesus cured a demoniac, healed Peter's mother-in-law, and wrought many miracles at Even-tide.

CURE OF THE DEMONIAIC (33-37). This miracle is recorded, in almost identical words in Mk. i, 23-27. There was present in the synagogue a man who had an *unclean demon*. The adjective here used, and which occurs 19 times in the Gospels, does not designate any sin to which he is prone, but designates him as evil, as opposed to goodness and holiness. The Gentiles designated all spirits by the general term "daemones"; and the term "unclean" is added to show what kind of spirit was here present. The demoniacs had become the prey and victims of the evil spirits that entered into them and exercised control over their minds and members. Though the will continued to belong to the men possessed, yet they were habitually only the instruments which the evil spirits used at pleasure. These unfortunate men had lucid intervals, during which they regained possession of themselves and free use of their faculties.

The evil spirit that had entered this man could no longer

(34) Ah! What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Thou art come to destroy us. I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. (35) And Jesus rebuked him, saying: Hold thy peace, and come out of him! And when the devil

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remain quiet in the presence of Jesus. His holiness and His doctrine acted as a scourge to him, and he cried out in anger and dismay: *Ah! What have we to do with thee, Jesus of Nazareth?* He uses the plural, either because many were present or because he speaks in the name of all his kind. The expression here used occurs rather frequently in Sacred Scripture and under varying circumstances (cf. Mt. viii, 29; Jo. ii, 4; Jdg. xi, 12; II Kgs. xvi, 10; III Kgs. xvii, 18; IV Kgs. iii, 13; II Par. xxxv, 21). Its exact meaning depends, to a great extent, on the circumstances in which it is used and, perhaps, on the manner in which it is spoken. It should also be noted that there is no verb expressed in the sentence, neither in the Hebrew, nor Greek, nor Latin; so that translated literally it reads: "What to me and to thee?" In the present instance, the expression seems to have the meaning as rendered in our translation, and expresses an opposition between Jesus and Satan. This is borne out by the second statement of the evil spirit: *Thou art come to destroy us*, i.e., to break our power over men and drive us from them; and against this he protests. By this time Satan was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah and professes this knowledge by declaring Jesus the *Holy One of God*.

At the outcry of the evil spirit, Jesus imposes silence upon him. There is here no indication of the "cure by suggestion," a fanciful theory invented by modern critics. Besides imposing silence, Jesus commands the spirit to depart from the man. Satan must obey the voice of Jesus; yet he makes a final attempt to inflict injury upon the man, throwing him down in the midst of the assembly, and "tearing him," as

had thrown him down in the midst, he went out of him, without injuring him at all. (36) And amazement came upon all; and they spoke among themselves, saying: What is this word? For with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits and they come out. (37) And the fame of him was published into every place of the country.

(38) And Jesus rising up out of the synagogue, went into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. (39) And

Mark says. But St. Luke adds that the devil inflicted no harm on the man.

This unusual occurrence, the evidence of Satan's malignity and the evidence of the power of Jesus, filled all with fear and awe. They wonder at His doctrine, confirmed and accompanied by such great works.

CURE OF PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW (38-39). The miracle is given also in Mt. viii, 14-15 and Mk. i, 29-31. Leaving the synagogue after the miracle, Jesus went into the house of Simon. This was most probably the house that served as occasional lodging for Jesus when he was in Capharnaum. Simon, the future St. Peter and Prince of the Apostles, was a native of Bethsaida (Jo. i, 44), but made his home in Capharnaum. From this text we learn that St. Peter was married before his call to the apostolate. This is the only mention of his wife, whom many think had died before this time.

*The great fever*, is a medical expression. The ancient physicians distinguished between the "great" and the "little" fever; and Hippocrates specialized in the former. Peter's mother-in-law was afflicted with a serious and dangerous fever, perhaps malaria which was frequent along the marshy shores of the upper lake. At the prayer and faith of those present, Jesus commanded the fever, and it left her. Her cure was instantaneous and complete; for there was no

standing over her, he commanded the fever; and it left her. And immediately rising, she ministered to them.

(40) And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them to him. But he laying his hands on every one of them, healed them.

(41) But demons also came out from many, crying out and saying: Thou art the Son of God. And rebuking them, he

weakness or exhaustion such as fever always leaves behind when cured by natural causes. She arose and used her recovered health and strength in the service of Jesus.

THE SABBATH EVENING (40-41). (Cf. Mt. viii, 16-17; Mk. i, 32-34.) The report of the two miracles spread through the city and brought new hope to all who were suffering. *When the sun was setting*, i.e., when the sabbath day ended, they brought their sick to Jesus. The Jews counted their days from sunset to sunset, not from midnight to midnight. It was forbidden to carry the sick through the streets on the sabbath day; and so they waited till sundown, when the sabbath ended, to carry the sick to Jesus. It should be noted here that all three accounts clearly distinguish between the sick and those who were possessed by the devil. Those who were sick He cured by laying His hands upon them; and those who were possessed He freed by a single word. Evidently the possessed are not merely sick people. For neither Christ nor the Evangelists confused sickness with possession; nor did they ascribe all sickness to the evil spirits.

It is clear that Satan recognized Jesus as the Messiah who would destroy His power; for the Gospel states that *they knew He was the Christ*. The prophets also cast out devils. But while they cast them out in the name of God and by the use of certain formulas, Jesus drove them out by His own authority and with a single word of command. Many reasons are given why Jesus forbade the devils to proclaim

suffered them not to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ.

(42) And when it was day, going out, he went into a desert place; and the multitude sought him, and came to him; and they stayed him that he should not go from them.

(43) But he said to them: To the other cities also I must preach the Kingdom of God; for therefore am I sent.

(44) And he was preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

Him as the Messiah, viz., He would not accept testimony from them; it was not proper that Satan should usurp the office of Apostle; Jesus did not wish His true character proclaimed till after the Resurrection. As yet, the world was not prepared to receive the great mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God; neither were the people ready to accept a Messiah as Jesus was, or a Kingdom as He established it. They needed to be prepared, to be slowly taught the Person of Jesus and the spiritual nature of His Kingdom. This plan Satan perhaps wished to frustrate by arousing an untimely enthusiasm among the people. This view gains support from the fact that Jesus also forbade the apostles to proclaim Him to the people before the Resurrection.

DEPARTURE FROM CAPHARNAUM (42-44). (Cf. Mk. i, 35-39.) On the morning following the miracles just recorded, ("very early" says Mark) Jesus left the city. It was His intention to escape the enthusiastic multitudes, and to pray (Mark). But the people followed Him and asked that He remain in their city. Jesus replies that He must preach in the other cities as well as in Capharnaum. He came not for one city, nor for one district alone. His mission included all the other cities of Israel.

## Chapter V

(1) And it came to pass that, when the multitude pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Genesareth. (2) And he saw two boats standing by

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### *The Miraculous Draught of Fishes. V, 1-11.*

It is evident that this miracle did not follow immediately upon the sabbath day described above. At the end of the account of that day, both Mark and Luke state that Jesus departed from Capharnaum. In the present account we find Jesus again in the neighborhood of Capharnaum, on the shores of the Lake.

This Lake, so often mentioned in the Gospel history, bore different names. In ancient times it was called the "Sea of Cenereth" (Num. xxxiv, 11). Later it was called the "Sea of Genesar" (I Mach. xi, 67). St. Luke retains this name, under the varying form "Genesareth." Mt. and Mk. usually call it the "Sea of Galilee," which is not a proper name, but a designation as THE sea of the district. St. John gives it its Roman name, "Sea of Tiberius." The lake is about 700 feet below the level of the Mediterranean and encompassed by mountains on the east and the west. Its greatest length is about 13, and its greatest width about 6 miles.

The preaching of Jesus, despite the attitude of the people of Nazareth, had made an impression upon those who heard Him, and great multitudes flocked to hear Him. If we exclude Nazareth, the first signs of real opposition to Jesus in Galilee are connected closely with the appearance of Pharisees from Judea and Jerusalem.

the lake; but the fishermen were gone out of them and were washing their nets. (3) And going into one of the boats that was Simon's he desired him to put out a little from the land. And sitting, he taught the multitudes out of the boat. (4) And when he had ceased speaking, he said to Simon: Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a draught. (5) And Simon answering, said to him: Master, we have labored all the night and have taken nothing; but at thy word I will let down the nets. (6) And when they had done this they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes;

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There were two boats standing by the lake. They had been anchored to the shore, and the fishermen were washing their nets after the night's work. Wishing to satisfy the desire of the people to hear the Word of God, Jesus enters into Peter's boat; and having drawn out from the shore, He taught the people. The Fathers see in this teaching from the boat of Peter a symbol of the Teaching Office in the Church; and the catacombs contain representations of the event as a symbol of the Church. When Jesus had finished His discourse, He commanded Peter to draw out from the shore and let down his nets for a draught. Peter calls attention to the fact that he and his companions had labored all the night, which is the more opportune time for fishing, and had taken nothing. Yet, he declares himself ready to obey the command of Jesus.

The faith and obedience of Peter is rewarded. No sooner had they let down the nets than they enclosed so great a number of fish that the net was on the point of breaking. That this draught of fish was miraculous cannot be denied; for had there been nothing extraordinary in the matter, it would not have made such an impression upon the minds of the fishermen. It was either a miracle of omniscience, Jesus knowing where a shoal of fish could be found; or it was a miracle of omnipotence, Jesus causing the fish to



and their nets were breaking. (7) And they beckoned to their partners that were in the other boat, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both boats so that they began to sink. (8) And Simon Peter when he saw it, fell down at Jesus' knees, saying: Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man. (9) For he was wholly astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of fishes which they had taken. (10) And so were also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. And Jesus said to Simon: Fear not; from henceforth thou

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gather in a certain place by an act of His all-powerful will. In order to save their nets and to bring the catch to shore, the men in Peter's boat beckoned to James and John, the sons of Zebedee. With their aid the nets are drawn in, the fish filling both boats.

Especially great was the effect of the miracle on Peter. Falling down at the feet of Jesus, He exclaims: *Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man.* He had witnessed at least three of the miracles of Jesus: at Cana, and in Capernaum. The present miracle was one concerning his own trade and so was likely to make a greater impression upon him, just as the cure of a disease will make a greater impression upon a physician. The miracle brought home to him the greatness of Jesus and a consciousness of his own littleness. He declares himself unworthy of being in the presence of Jesus. But Jesus bids him not to fear and proclaims his destiny: *from henceforth thou shalt catch men.* "Fear not and be not amazed Simon, but rather be glad and rejoice; for you are called to a higher art of fishing; a new boat and a different net will be given you. By your word you will take men in as far as you draw them to the way of life by your teaching" (St. Augustine). Having brought their boats to land (and naturally, having disposed of the fish), they left all things and followed Jesus. St. Chrysostom

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shalt catch men. (11) And having brought their boats to land, leaving all things, they followed him.

(12) And it came to pass when he was in one of the cities, behold, a man full of leprosy, who seeing Jesus, fell upon his face and besought him, saying: Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. (13) And stretching forth his hand, he touched him, saying: I will; be thou made clean. And im-

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calls on us to admire the dispensation of Providence. God draws each by the art that is most familiar to him: The wise men by a star; the shepherds by an angel; the fishermen by a draught of fishes.

The call of Peter, Andrew, James and John is likewise recorded in Mt. iv, 18-22 and Mk. i, 16-20. Though the accounts differ in some details, they all refer to one and the same event. This is certain as regards the accounts of Mt. and Mk. Some difference of opinion exists as to whether Lk. here refers to the same event as the first two. But the generally accepted and true opinion is that all three speak of the same call. For it is hardly probable that Jesus twice called them and twice promised to make them fishers of men; and they could not have twice left all things. The three accounts are harmonized as follows: Jesus finds the fishermen cleaning their nets (common to the three); Jesus teaches and works the miracle (proper to Lk.); after disposing of the fish and returning to the washing of their nets, Jesus calls them to follow Him (Mt. and Mk.; supposed in Lk.); leaving all things they follow Jesus (common to the three). These four were led to Jesus through the Baptist (Jo. i, 35-42); they now become close and constant disciples of Jesus; later they are chosen as Apostles.

### *Cure of the Leper. V, 12-16*

Cf. Mt. viii, 1-4; Mk. i, 40-45. There is no difference in the three accounts. The place of the miracle is not given, but it is generally thought to have taken place in Capernaum.

As Jesus was entering the city there met him a man *full of leprosy*, the disease being far advanced. A description of

mediately the leprosy departed from him. (14) And he charged him to tell no man; but: Go thy way and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing according as Moses commanded; for a testimony to them. (15) But the report concerning him went abroad the more; and great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed of their infirmities. (16) And he retired into the desert, and prayed.

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the disease and the regulations touching those afflicted with it are found in Lev. xiii and xiv. When the leper saw Jesus, he gave expression to his reverence and faith by word and by act. He prostrates himself before Jesus, a sign of respect and reverence among the Orientals. His faith in the power of Jesus is expressed in his petition: *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*; all that is required is a will act of Jesus. He replies to the leper's petition in the words of the leper: *I will, be thou made clean*. After the cure, Jesus commands him to tell no man of the cure. This command was given that the man might quickly fulfil the second command: *Go show thyself to the priest*. According to the Law of Moses (Lev. xiv, 2), if a leper were cleansed it was the duty and office of the priest to declare him clean. Before such a declaration on part of the priest, the leper had to abide by the law and could not communicate with his relatives and friends. It was also commanded (Lev. xiv, 21-22) that the leper offer a sacrifice after being cleansed from his leprosy. Jesus commands the man to fulfil these requirements of the law. The obeying of the law would be a *testimony to them*, a testimony of Jesus' respect for the Law of God, a testimony to the power of Jesus. The priest would have to declare the man cured and accept his offering; and thus be forced to admit the miracle. Though Jesus imposed silence on the man, the report of the miracle spread throughout the country, and great multitudes came to hear Him and to be cured of their

(17) And it came to pass on one of those days, that he was teaching; and there were also Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, who had come out of every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. (18) And behold, men bring-

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diseases. In the face of this popularity, Jesus retired into the desert to pray.

### *Cure of the Paralytic. V, 17-26*

The miracle is likewise recorded in Mt. ix, 1-8 and Mk. ii, 1-12. St. Luke does not state where the miracle took place. Mt. states that it was in "His own city," i.e., Capharnaum; and Mk. expressly mentions this city. From the latter account we learn that Jesus entered the city quietly and unobserved and went to the house of Simon.

As soon as the people learned of the presence of Jesus, great crowds came to hear Him. So great was the number of people that came to the house of Simon Peter that there was not even room at the door (Mark). Among those present were Pharisees and doctors of the law. *Doctors of the law* is the term under which St. Luke usually designates the scribes. They bore this name because they were the recognized teachers of the Law. They came not only from Galilee but also from Judea and Jerusalem. The Pharisees and scribes of Jerusalem and Judea had plotted against Jesus at the feast of the Pasch (Jo. v, 16). They now extend their activities to Galilee.

While Jesus was speaking to the people, certain men (Mk.: four) carried a paralytic to the door of the house. Not being able to bring him in, because of the crowd, they ascended to the roof of the house. In the Orient the roofs of the dwellings are usually light in construction, consisting of reeds and branches covered with a coating of clay or tiles.

ing on a bed a man that had the palsy; and they sought means to bring him in and lay him before him. (19) And not finding by what means they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went up to the housetop and let him down through the tiles with his bed into the midst before Jesus. (20) And seeing their faith, he said: Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. (21) And the scribes and Pharisees began to reason saying: Who is this that speaketh blasphemy?

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The task of removing the tiles of the roof was a simple matter and any damage done could be easily repaired. It is not any difficulty in the task that is emphasized, but the extraordinary means used to come to Jesus. There was no displeasure on His part because of the interruption, for *He saw their faith*. It was the faith of the sick man, who sought the cure; and the faith of his friends, who were not deterred by obstacles. Their faith is rewarded by a greater favor than they had expected. Jesus saw the state of the sick man's soul, which was of more importance than the condition of his body. He saw also the disposition of the man and declared that his sins were forgiven.

This act of mercy on the part of Jesus aroused opposition from the scribes and Pharisees, who *began to reason*, i.e., to draw up an accusation against Him, in their minds. They knew that the Sacred Scriptures declare that the forgiveness of sin is a divine prerogative (v.g., Ex. xxxiv, 7; Is. xliii, 25). They also knew that Nathan freed David from his sin, but had done this in the name of God. Their reasoning may be thus stated: Whoever forgives sin in his own name is God or a blasphemer; but this man is not God; therefore he is a blasphemer, arrogating to himself divine power.

Jesus does claim divine power to forgive sin in His own name and by His own authority; and, according to the logic of the Pharisees, He claims to be God. Both claims He

Who can forgive sins, but God alone. (22) And Jesus knowing their reasonings, answered and said to them: What is this that you think in your hearts? (23) Which is easier, to say: Thy sins are forgiven thee; or, to say: Arise and walk? (24) But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sin (he said to the man sick of the palsy), I say to thee: Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house. (25) And immediately rising up before them, he took up that upon which he lay, and went away into

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proves by a miracle. First of all, He manifests that He knows their thoughts. The reading of the secret thoughts of man is declared a divine prerogative in the Scriptures (cf. Ps. vii, 10; I Par. xxviii, 9). Before proceeding to work the miracle in proof of His power, He addresses the Pharisees and lays before them a question which they are to answer according to their own logic: *Which is easier, to say: Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say: Arise and walk?* Jesus does not ask them which sentence is the easier of utterance; neither does the question regard the greatness of the work. By the context, "say" has the sense of "to claim." Jesus wishes to emphasize the difficulty of proving the truth of the statement made. In this sense it is easier to say: "Thy sins are forgiven"; for no man could prove whether the statement is true or false. He who says: "Arise and walk," exposes himself and his reputation to an evident test. Jesus will speak the second sentence; He will command the man to rise and walk in proof that He possesses power to forgive sin: *That you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sin.* Jesus works the miracle in His own name and by His own power and authority: *I say to thee.* God alone can perform miracles in His own name; and He cannot allow miracles to be wrought in favor of error, for miracles are His stamp of approval. Jesus, working a miracle in His own name,

proves His divine power to forgive sin. And, according to the logic of the Pharisees, He proves that He is God.

**THE SON OF MAN.** It was not by accident that Jesus used this title on the present occasion. It stands in manifest opposition to the opinion of the Pharisees. Jesus wishes to show them that He is more than man, that He is the One of whom Daniel spoke (vii, 13-14). The "Son of Man" in this prophecy is recognized as the Messiah; and by applying the title to Himself Jesus declares that He is the Messiah. By appealing to His character as Son of Man, Jesus gave sufficient proof that He possessed the power to forgive sin. This title directly indicates that He is man; but at the same time it declares that He is more than man; He is God-Man. As God-Man, He made satisfaction for sin. And therefore He possesses, as Man, the power of forgiving sin and can delegate other men to forgive sin in His name.

The title "Son of Man" occurs eighty times in the Gospels. It is used by Jesus alone; neither the Evangelists nor the people address Him by this title. On the other hand, Jesus never applies to Himself the other titles of the Messiah, though He permits and sanctions their use by others. He lived, labored, taught, suffered and died, and demanded faith in Himself as the Son of Man. As Son of Man He has power to forgive sin, He is Lord of the sabbath, He is Lord of life and death, the Savior and Judge of mankind. He seems to have avoided all other titles because of the worldly and carnal ideas which had become associated with them and were prevalent at that time. The life, teaching and sufferings of Jesus were all opposed to the idea of a worldly Messiah and the establishment of a great temporal kingdom in power and glory. On the other hand, "Son of Man" was a title of the Messiah, though it was not in common use, nor was it a favorite with the people. It carried with it the idea of weakness and suffering; and from this the people shrank. Jesus places this in the foreground by use of the title. Thus could He hold fast to what was true in the prevalent idea concerning the Messiah and gradually separate from it all that was false, at least as regarded His apostles. He could, by word and work, bring them to a higher and nobler understanding of His Person and of His Kingdom. As Son of Man, He is true man; but He is more than man. He is the Messiah and Savior; but salvation shall come through His sufferings.

his own house, glorifying God. (26) And all were astonished, and they glorified God; and they were filled with fear, saying: We have seen wonderful things to-day.

(27) And after these things, he went forth and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place of toll, and said to him: Follow me! (28) And leaving all things, he rose

*Call of Levi-Matthew. V, 27-32*

Cf. Mt. ix, 9-13; Mk. ii, 13-17. The three accounts agree in all things except the name of the man called to the discipleship. In Mk. and Lk. he is called Levi; in Mt. he is called Matthew. Catholic tradition, from the earliest days, has always identified Levi and Matthew; and this tradition is well founded upon the Sacred Scriptures. The circumstances of time and place of the call, as well as the occupation of the newly called disciple and the feast given by him, are the same in all accounts. Besides, all others who receive a call such as Levi received were later chosen as apostles. The difference in name is accounted for either (a) by the fact that he bore two names, which was not infrequent among the Jews; or (b) by the fact that he changed his name in grateful remembrance of the grace received, Matthew meaning "Gift of God." As St. Matthew is the one who records his call under his better known name, so also is he the one who adds "the publican" to his name in the list of apostles.

After the cure of the paralytic, Jesus went forth from the house where the cure had been wrought; and Mark adds that He taught the people by the seaside. Here He saw a publican sitting at the place of toll. He most probably belonged to the class of publicans called *Mokhes* in the Talmud. Their activity consisted in collecting import duties and tax upon the fisheries of the Lake. At that time Levi-Matthew was actively engaged in this occupation. Being a native of Capharnaum, or having his residence in that city, he had no doubt seen and heard of Jesus before this time. Jesus calls him to leave the customs service and become His disciple. Levi-Matthew answers the call.



up and followed him. (29) And Levi made him a great feast in his own home; and there was a great multitude of publicans and of others that were at table with them. (30) But the Pharisee and their scribes murmured against his disciples, saying: Why do you eat and drink with publicans and sinners? (31) And Jesus answering, said to

MATTHEW'S FEAST (29-32). As an expression of gratitude, and perhaps in order to give others the opportunity of meeting Jesus, the newly made disciple entertains with a great feast. It need not be assumed that the feast took place on the day of his call. Both Matthew and Mark separate the feast from the call, introducing it with the clause "it came to pass." It would require some time to prepare the feast and invite the guests. We have here, in all three Gospels, a logical arrangement. The call, the feast, the question of fasting, are closely connected. One leads to the other; and the Gospels have placed them together as embracing one series of facts.

The invited guests at the feast were, besides Jesus and the disciples, a *great multitude of publicans and others*, the latter being, most probably, social outcasts; for with no others could the publicans associate. There were also present (cf. Mt.), but not as guests, certain Pharisees and their scribes. They raised objection to the action of Jesus. They do not come to Him with their complaints but attack Him through the disciples. They hope to cause them to doubt and distrust Jesus by asking why they ate with publicans and sinners.

Jesus comes to the aid of the disciples. He ignores the insinuation against them and answers for Himself, assuming the responsibility for their act. They were present because He was. He justifies His presence with the proverbial saying: *They that are whole need not the physician; but they that are sick.* A physician goes where his presence is most

them: they that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick. (32) I am not come to call the just but sinners to penance.

(33) And they said to him: The disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and the disciples of the Pharisees also in like manner; but thine eat and drink. (34) To whom he said: Can you make the children of the bridegroom fast while the bridegroom is with them? (35) But the days will

needed. Jesus is the Divine Physician of the soul, having come to heal man of his spiritual infirmities. For this reason He is in the present company, and His presence is justified. He mingled with sinners in order to save them. In emphatic terms Jesus declares the purpose of His mission: *I am come not to call the just, but sinners to repentance.* There were truly just people in the days of Christ, some of whom we have met in the Gospel; but they were not just, except through Christ, all grace being given through Christ after the Fall. Had it been possible for any to be saved without Him, Jesus would have come for the sake of the others. The word of Jesus is an emphatic declaration that His Mission was to save sinners.

### *The Question of Fasting.* V, 33-39

This question followed immediately upon the feast given by Matthew. It is recorded, with minor differences, in Mt. ix, 14-17 and Mk. ii, 18-22.

The parties concerned in this matter are vaguely designated under the term "they." From Matthew and Mark we learn that the disciples of St. John and the disciples of the Pharisees were present. They object that the disciples of Jesus eat and drink while the disciples of St. John and of the Pharisees fast. The statement supposes opposition between the two groups of disciples. Those of John and the

Pharisees are declared more pious than the disciples of Jesus.

The Jews attached great importance to fasting. With prayer and almsgiving, it formed the ordinary work of piety. One day of general fast, the Day of Atonement, was established by the Law. The Old Testament mentions four national fast days (Zach. viii, 9), which were introduced by custom or some particular law. Fasting is frequently recommended in the Scriptures as a work pleasing to God. and days of fast were kept by all in times of need. In the days of our Lord, the Pharisees, and others also, imposed upon themselves two fast days each week, Monday and Thursday. The disciples of St. John, following the example of their master, seem to have fasted frequently. It may be that Matthew's feast took place on one of these private fast days. Hence the statement of the disciples. The reply of Jesus is made in a series of similes and parables.

THE CHILDREN OF THE BRIDEGROOM (34-35). The *children of the bridegroom* are all the guests invited to a marriage feast. According to Oriental usage, the term "child" was applied to anything or anyone closely connected with another or belonging to him. The guests who assisted the bridegroom in the ceremony of introducing the bride into his home were called the "friends of the bridegroom." The figure here used was apt to make an impression upon the disciples of St. John. For he had declared to them that he was the "friend of the bridegroom," who is Jesus (Jo. iii, 29).

The union of the two natures in Christ may be spoken of as a marriage. The happiness of heaven, the eternal union with God, the Covenant between God and His people, the union of Christ with the Church, the union of Christ with the soul, are all spoken of as a spiritual marriage in the Scriptures and by the Fathers. Jesus is the Bridegroom, the disciples the children of the bridegroom. They are celebrating the union of Christ with the Church, now being founded; and in particular are they celebrating the call of

come, and when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, then shall they fast in those days. (36) And he spoke also a parable to them: No man taketh a piece from a new garment and putteth it upon an old garment; other-

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Matthew. On such an occasion, according to the words of Jesus, it is not fitting that His disciples should fast and mourn. This rejoicing shall not continue without interruption. Verse 35 contains a three-fold emphasis on the fact that the disciples will fast at a later day: *The days shall come . . . then . . . in those days*. Since Jesus says that the *Bridegroom shall be taken from them*, He gives an intimation of His death. When those days come His disciples shall fast.

To grasp the fundamental idea of this parable we must remember that the Pharisees, in their self-sufficient righteousness, esteemed the external act of fasting too highly, as indeed they did all other external works. They sought by these external works to appear as representatives of piety; and while they performed the works, they neglected and ignored the spirit which should animate them. In opposing this idea and mode of life, Jesus does not condemn the asceticism of St. John, nor does He blame anyone for fasting; but He points out the spirit that must accompany works of piety. Neither did Jesus discourage His disciples from fasting, nor did He declare that fasting was worthless (cf. Mt. vi, 16-18); and we shall see several direct admonitions to practice self-denial and penance.

THE OLD AND THE NEW (36-39). In the three similes that follow, there is a comparison between the old and the new.

In the first simile Jesus states that no man takes a piece of cloth from a new garment in order to use it as a patch on an old garment. For the two do not agree and, the new cloth shrinking, the rent in the old garment becomes greater.

wise he will rend the new, and the piece taken from the new agrees not with the old. (37) And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins; otherwise the new wine will break the skins, and it will be spilled; and the skins will be lost.

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Both are spoiled. In the second simile, likewise taken from daily life, Jesus declares that no man puts new wine into old wine-skins. For the new wine ferments easily; and to resist the second fermentation, the wine-skins must be strong and flexible. If they are old, hard and cracked, they break and the wine is spilled.

These two similes have two points in common: the difference between the old and the new; the impossibility of combining both into one harmonious whole. An attempt to do so renders both useless. Keeping these two points in mind, it is not difficult to understand the meaning of the similes. In the preceeding, Jesus had pointed out the new and interior spirit that is to prevail in the New Law, as contrasted with the mournful and external observance of the Old Law as exemplified in the lives of the Pharisees. If now Jesus contrasts the old and the new, He illustrates the difference between the Old and the New Law. The old garment and the old wine-skins represent the Old Law, the new garment and the new wine the New Law. The prophets had foretold that God would create a new thing, a new covenant to take the place of the old (cf. Is. xliii, 19; Jer. xxxi, 31; Ez. xi, 19). The predicted end of the Old order was at hand; Jesus had begun to establish the New. The two cannot be combined. The Gospel cannot be placed as a patch upon the Old Dispensation; nor can the spirit of the New be enclosed in the formalism of the Old. The behavior of the Pharisees showed that they expected Jesus to adopt their view for Himself and the disciples. The folly of thus attempting to combine the entire Old with the entire New is shown in the two similes.

(38) But new wine must be put into new wine-skins (and both are preserved). (39) And no man having drunk old, desireth new; for he saith: The old is good.

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The third example is of a man to whom new wine is offered. He has been accustomed to drink old wine, and so does not readily turn to the new; for he judges the old to be good. The comparison here is not made between the quality of the old and the new; the man, in fact, does not even try the new. The example shows how natural it is for man to find difficulty in changing his habits and mode of thought. It seems to be an excuse for the disciples of John. They had been brought up under the Old order and find it difficult to change to the New.

## Chapter VI

(1) And it came to pass on the second first sabbath, that he went through the fields of corn; and his disciples plucked the ears and did eat, rubbing them in their hands. (2) But some of the Pharisees said to them: Why do you that which is unlawful on the sabbath day? (3) And Jesus answering

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### *Plucking the Corn on the Sabbath.* VI, 1-5

Cf. Mt. xii, 1-8; Mk. ii, 23-28. The chief difference in the three accounts lies in the answer of Jesus to the accusation of the Pharisees. It is again evident that not each Gospel gives all that Jesus said on every occasion. We shall point out these details, below.

The disciples, passing through the fields of ripening grain, pluck the ears of corn to appease their hunger. The fact that the grain was ripe and not yet harvested necessitates placing the event between the feasts of Pasch and Pentecost. The harvesting began after the former and ended with the latter feast. St. Luke designates the day as the *second first sabbath*, a term found nowhere else in the Scriptures, nor in Greek or Jewish literature. The meaning of the term is much disputed. But taken in connection with the state of the crops, the more probable meaning is that it was the first sabbath after the second day of the Paschal octave, or the second sabbath after the Pasch.

The action of the disciples in plucking the corn to satisfy their hunger was lawful, being permitted by the Law of Moses (cf. Dt. xxiii, 25). But the disciples did this on the sabbath and the Pharisees accused them of violating the

them, said: Have you not read even this, what David did, when he was hungry, he and they that were with him? (4) How he went into the house of God and took and ate the bread of proposition, and gave also to them that were

Lord's Day. According to Rabbinical notions, what was one act of labor might become several acts forbidden by the law, and any act that could be considered as a part of a forbidden act was also forbidden. Thus they would consider the action of the disciples as reaping, thrashing and preparing food, all of which were forbidden.

In replying to this accusation, Jesus places the matter of sabbath service and the Law upon a higher plane than the Pharisees. The Law of God indeed forbade certain works on the sabbath; and the Pharisees, standing by the strict wording of the Law without considering its spirit, had placed so many restrictions upon sabbath-day activities that its observance became an intolerable burden. They paid no attention whatever to the purpose for which God had given the command to keep holy the one day of the week. To them the whole aim and object of the Law was to place restrictions on man; and the Talmudic treatise on the Sabbath contains little, if anything, of spiritual value. Our Lord teaches that the sabbath is made for man, and not man for the sabbath; that the observance of the day is not to be an intolerable burden, but an aid to man in his religious and social life; that obeying the letter of the Law without entering into its spirit is an unworthy observance of the Law. We arrive at the full meaning of the Lord's reply by comparing the three accounts.

Jesus first replies by an example taken from I Kgs. xxi, 1-6. David was forced to flee from Saul. In his flight he came to Nob and, being hungry, asked the High Priest for food. The High Priest gave him the *bread of proposition*, i.e., the bread that was placed before the Lord. This con-



with him, which is not lawful to eat, but only for the priests?  
(5) And he said to them: The Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath.

(6) And it came to pass on another sabbath that he entered into a synagogue and taught; and there was a man

sisted of twelve loaves, one for each of the twelve tribes. Representing the faith and devotion of Israel, they were kept in the Holy Place and renewed each week. The Law commanded that only the priests should eat this bread. If then, necessity freed the High Priest and David from the observance of this Law, the same need should free the disciples, provided their action was a violation of the Law.

St. Matthew, writing for the Jews, adds a second example. The priests offer sacrifice in the Temple on the sabbath; yet they are not accused of violating the Law, even though their ministry included many acts declared forbidden on the sabbath by the Pharisees. If the service of God excuses them, then the same virtue of religion excuses the disciples who are in the service of the Lord.

St. Mark adds: "The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath." The Law of sabbath rest was given as a blessing to man and not as an oppressive burden; the whole purpose of man's existence is not to refrain from certain works, as the Pharisees seemed to think. And St. Matthew, again: "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." Jesus condemns them for condemning the innocent without examining whether or not their act is excusable. There must be some reason that excuses from positive laws; and two reasons are given in the examples: the necessities of man and religion.

Finally, Jesus declares: *The Son of Man is Lord of the sabbath.* The sabbath is the Lord's Day, and He is the Lord. He could therefore declare what was lawful and what was unlawful on the sabbath. It will be seen that Jesus had no intention of abolishing the Lord's Day; He declares the spirit in which the day should be observed and the purpose of the Law.

there whose right hand was withered. (7) And the scribes and Pharisees watched him if he would heal on the sabbath, that they might find how to accuse him. (8) But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand: Arise, and stand forth. And rising, he stood forth. (9) And Jesus said to them: I ask you if it be lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do evil; to save life, or to destroy? (10) And looking round about on them all, he said to the man: Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so,

*The Man with the Withered Hand.* VI, 6-11

Cf. Mt. xii, 9-14; Mk. iii, 1-6.

Upon another sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. There was present a man whose right hand was withered. He was suffering from partial atrophy, which consists in a gradual wasting of the limb with the loss of its power of motion. Once established, it is incurable. Perhaps the Pharisees and scribes had purposely brought the man into the synagogue to afford Jesus an opportunity of performing a work of mercy, though this supposition is not necessary.

Jesus knew their thoughts, that they were watching Him and thinking of formulating an accusation against Him if He healed the man on the sabbath. Jesus commands the man to come forward; and with him before their eyes, He asks: *I ask you, if it be lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do evil; to save life or destroy?* The question is pointed: Is a man allowed to do a good work and save life, as you expect me to do in the case of this man; or is he allowed to do evil and destroy life, as you seek to do? Or: May a man do good and thus save life; or refraining from good, destroy life? The *good* to be done or left undone is restricted, by the context and circumstances, to works of mercy.

and his hand was restored. (11) And they were filled with madness; and they consulted one with another, what they should do to Jesus.

(12) And it came to pass in those days that he went out into a mountain to pray; and he passed the whole night in

Jesus teaches them that the law of charity and mercy is above the sabbath; that the doing of good is not limited to certain days. And this He proves by a miracle. He simply commands the man to stretch forth his hand, and in the action he is cured. Thus Jesus answered them, did a work of mercy, and gave them no opportunity of bringing an accusation against Him. *They were filled with madness*, for Jesus had unmasked their hypocrisy and malice, and they were more determined than ever to encompass His ruin.

#### *Choice of the Apostles. VI, 12-16*

Cf. Mk. iii, 13-19. St. Matthew does not give an account of the choosing of the Apostles. On the occasion of their mission he gives a list of their names (x, 1-3).

The importance of the choice is shown by the fact that Jesus spent the entire preceding night in prayer. On the next morning He called together the disciples and chose twelve from among them. Mark: "He called unto Him whom He would himself," for He alone had the right to select them; and He made the choice freely and gratuitously (cf. Jo. xv, 16). These twelve He called *Apostles*, which signifies "one sent." The term is used only once in Matthew, Mark and John, and six times in Luke. They are usually designated as "the twelve." Mk. iii, 14-15 gives three reasons for the choice: (1) They were to be with Him; (2) They were to preach; (3) They were to exercise works of charity.

the prayer of God. (13) And when day was come, he called his disciples, and from them chose twelve whom also he called apostles; (14) Simon whom he surnamed Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew, (15) and Matthew and Thomas, and James the son of Alpheus, and Simon who is called the Zealot, (16) and

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*Simon, whom He surnamed Peter.* Henceforth, the Gospel always speaks of him by the surname given. At his first meeting with Jesus he was told that his name would be changed to *Kepha*, i.e., "the Rock" (Peter); and the surname was given him when he was called to be an apostle. He was given this name because he is the head of the Church, the Rock upon which the Church is founded (cf. Mt. xvi, 18). *Andrew, his brother.* These two apostles were sons of Jonas, who lived in Bethsaida of Galilee, a village near Capharnaum.

*James and John* were brothers, the sons of Zebedee and Salome. The elder of the two is known as James the Greater, to distinguish him from the other apostle of the same name. These two, together with Peter, were the favored of the apostles, being chosen as witnesses of the raising of the daughter of Jairus, the Transfiguration and the Agony. *Philip* was one of the first disciples of Jesus; and brought Nathaniel (Bartholomew) to Him. He was a native of Bethsaida (Jo. xii, 21). *Bartholomew* is identical with Nathaniel. Bartholomew is only a patronymic, meaning "son of Tolmai," and he certainly would have a proper name. In John there is no mention of a Bartholomew, while Nathaniel is named among the apostles. On the other hand, the first three Gospels do not mention a Nathaniel among the apostles, but join Bartholomew with Philip, as Philip is joined with Nathaniel in the Fourth Gospel. *Matthew*, who styles himself "the publican." The reasons for identifying him with Levi have been given above. *Thomas*, who

Jude the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot who was the traitor.

(17) And coming down with them, he stood in a level place, and the company of his disciples, and a very great

is also called "Didymus" in the Fourth Gospel. His name in Aramaic was *Thoma*; and *Didymus* is the Greek translation of this name. *James, the son of Alphaeus*, who is also called "the Less," either because of his age or stature. He was one of the "brethren of the Lord" and the first Bishop of Jerusalem. *Simon who is called the Zealot*. In Matthew and Mark he is styled "the Cananæan." This title is the Greek form of the Aramaic *Kan'ana*, which means "the Zealot." It does not denote the place of his origin. *Jude, the brother of James*. He is also known as "Thaddeus" and as "Lebbeus." The former seems to be derived from "Thad" and the latter from Lebba, a city near Mt. Carmel. Either he had two names, or the title was given him to distinguish him from the traitor. *Judas Iscariot*. The surname means "the man of Carioth," a town in Judea.

### *The Sermon on the Mount. VI, 17-49*

The discourse of Jesus after the choosing of the apostles has been called "the sermon on the plain." However, it is to be given the title "Sermon on the Mount," for it is a briefer account of the Sermon found in Mt. v, vi and vii. Lk. connects the sermon with the choosing of the apostles, and everything indicates that he has placed it in its proper historical setting. Mt. does not follow the historical sequence, and has placed it at the beginning of the Public Ministry to show forth the teaching of the Lord. Yet in the introduction to the sermon, Mt. indicates that a somewhat lengthy period of preaching had preceded.

In both accounts, the sermon is preceded by an account of many miracles. The place of the sermon is the same in both; for the "level

multitude from all Judea and Jerusalem and the sea coast both of Tyre and Sidon, who were come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. (18) And they that were troubled with unclean spirits were healed. (19) And all the multitude sought to touch him, for virtue went forth from him and healed all.

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place," mentioned in Lk. is a plateau, such as found on the Horns of Hattim, the probable place of the sermon. The audience is the same in both accounts; and both have the same illustration, the same sequence of thought, the same conclusion. Moreover, all that is read in Lk. is found in Mt. St. Luke omits, as on other occasions, certain details, as the comparison between the Old and New Law, the denunciation of Pharisaic piety. He likewise omits other portions, which occur elsewhere in the Gospel.

When Jesus came down from the mountain, where He had chosen the apostles, He was met by a great multitude of people from various parts of the country. They brought with them the sick and the possessed. Again the Gospel clearly distinguishes between the two classes of afflicted people. Jesus cured all of them. Other similar accounts of group miracles are given in iv, 40 and v, 15. After curing the sick and freeing the possessed, Jesus delivered the sermon, the first part of which, according to the introduction of verse 20, seems to have been especially directed to the disciples. From verse 27, it seems to be directed to all who were present.

BEATITUDES AND WOES (20-26). (Cf. Mt. v, 3-12.) By the *poor* of the first beatitude, commentators have understood those who have given up all things to follow Christ, those who bear poverty patiently, and the rich who are not attached to their wealth. Comparing Matthew, we would say: The beatitude first regards those who are actually poor and bear their poverty in patience and from

(20) And he lifted up his eyes upon his disciples and said: Blessed are you poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God.

(21) Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh.

(22) Blessed are you when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you, and shall reproach you, and reject your

spiritual motives; in the second place, it also includes the rich who are not inordinately attached to their wealth, but are "poor in spirit." The blessing of poverty consists in the removal of one of the great temptations against piety and religion.

*You that hunger*, is commonly interpreted by the Fathers as applying to those who seek after spiritual things, whose desire for grace and holiness is likened to hunger. Others understand it of those who suffer privations because justice is denied them. But this view is contrary to the wording of Matthew, where "justice" means virtue and not justice in the strict sense; and it is the object of the hunger and thirst and not its cause. *They shall be filled*, i.e., will enjoy an abundance of grace in this life and fulness of spiritual refreshment in the life to come.

*You that weep now*, are they who lament and weep over their own sins and the sins of mankind, as also they who endure trials and difficulties in the spirit of resignation to the Will of God. Their reward is spiritual and internal joy in this life, which comes from the testimony of a good conscience, and which will find its perfection in the life to come.

The fourth beatitude, as recorded here, regards hatred and persecution, which was endured by Christ and which He frequently foretold as the lot of His faithful followers. *Separate you*, does not refer specifically to excommunication from the synagogue, though it includes this. It is a general term, designating any line of demarcation made in

name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. (23) Be glad in that day and rejoice; for behold, your reward is great in heaven. For according to these things did their fathers to the prophets. (24) But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. (25) Woe to you who are

prejudice to another. *Your name*, is the name by which they are known as disciples of Christ and members of His Church. This name will be considered as evil and spoken of with contempt. Hatred and persecution, in order to be blessed, must be *for the Son of Man's sake*. Hatred as a result of one's own evil conduct, even if it be a religious hatred, is not blessed. The hatred and persecution, both actively and passively, must be for the sake, and because, of Christ (cf. I Pt. iv, 15-16).

Jesus bids His disciples to *be glad in that day and rejoice*, an admonition followed by the apostles (cf. Ac. v, 40-41). Two reasons are given for joy in the time of persecution. *Your reward is great in Heaven*. Jesus promises a reward in Heaven to those who suffer persecution for His sake. He would have His followers keep this reward in mind that they become not discouraged or disheartened under trials and difficulties. The second motive for joy is also an earnest and pledge of the reward: *According to these things did their fathers to the prophets*. Those who persecute Christ and His Church are, by imitation, children of those who persecuted the prophets of old. The prophets were holy men and representatives of God; yet they were hated and persecuted. So also will the true Christian be hated and persecuted. And as the prophets are now enjoying their reward, so also shall the followers of Christ who suffer persecution for His sake. They are to receive "a prophet's reward" (Mt. x, 41).

In verses 24 to 26 St. Luke records four Woes, corresponding to the four beatitudes. It is not exact to call these



## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE III

filled now, for you shall hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall weep and mourn. (26) Woe to you when men shall praise you, for according to these things did their fathers to the false prophets.

(27) But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies,

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“Maledictions,” as some do. They are rather warnings and a repetition of the beatitudes by their opposites. *Woe to you who are rich*, certainly does not mean that malediction is pronounced upon every one that possesses the goods of this world. While riches are a source of sin and an obstacle to salvation, they are not an evil in themselves. The reason for the “woe” is: *you have received your consolation*, i.e., the poor consolation derived from riches in which they trusted is all that they get; they have no treasure in Heaven. The same applies to *you who are filled now* and to *you who laugh*. The warning and the woe is directed against those who seek their end and aim in such things, whose purpose is to enjoy the riches and pleasures of this life without regard to the things of eternity. When the day of eternity dawns for them they shall be without consolation, they shall hunger and mourn.

*Woe to you when men shall bless you*, i.e., when worldly men admire and praise you. The opposition to the fourth beatitude is too marked to permit misunderstanding. When the world applauds a man it is frequently a sign that he is living according to its maxims, that he is catering to the wishes and desires of evil men. This was a characteristic of the *false prophets* (cf. Jas. iv, 4), who were praised by evil men.

THE LAW OF CHARITY (27-36). (Cf. Mt. v, 38-48.) In this part of the discourse is given the Law of Charity, which must extend to all men. Since it is but natural that man love his friends and do good towards them who do good to him, Jesus at once declares this insufficient

do good to them that hate you, (28) praise them that curse you, and pray for them that treat you spitefully. (29) To him that striketh you on the one cheek, offer also the other; and from him that taketh away thy cloak, withhold not thy

in the Christian. Christian Charity must be universal (27-31) and disinterested (32-34); and such Charity alone is worthy of reward (35-36).

*Love your enemies*, i.e., repay with love those who do not love you and are opposed to you. *Do good to them that hate you*, i.e., repay with good works and deeds of charity those who do evil to you, at least in wish. *Praise them that curse you*, i.e., speak well of those who speak evil of you. *Pray for them that treat you spitefully*. Thus is the Christian admonished to return good for evil; and thus does the Law of Charity become universal. In the next verses Jesus opposes the principle of retaliation, the *lex talionis*.

All ancient nations recognized and followed the Law of Retaliation. It was taught and defended by Aristotle in his *Ethics*; was approved of in the Twelve Tables of the Romans; and was expressed by the Jews in the words of Sacred Scripture: "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" (Lev. xxiv, 20). It should be remembered that this regulation of the Law of Moses was intended as a directive norm in the administration of justice, and not for the dealings between private individuals. To this principle of retaliation Jesus opposes the law of conciliation and forbearance.

The four examples given in verses 29 and 30 are startling. The Christian is commanded to turn the other cheek to one who strikes him on the one cheek; to allow himself to be despoiled of his coat by one who takes away his cloak; to give to every one who asks; and not to require his goods from him who has taken them away. Are these admonitions to be understood literally, and are they of strict precept?

coat also. (30) Give to every one that asketh thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again. (31) And as you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner. (32) And if you love them that love you, what favor have you? for even sinners love those

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In the first place, Jesus is opposing principle to principle; and as the principle of retaliation meant that one is to seek revenge for every wrong done him, this saying of Jesus forbids the seeking of revenge. Resistance of evil should never be a *personal* matter; evil doers are to be punished to protect society and to preserve right order, not for the satisfaction of one's personal grievance. Hence, we may say that these examples are both a precept and a counsel: A precept in so far as they forbid revenge or reparation in the spirit of vindictiveness and command a spirit of conciliation towards those who have inflicted the injury; a counsel in so far as they admonish man to be ready to suffer a second injury rather than seek to avenge the first. "Love knows no limits but those which love itself imposes. When love resists or refuses, it is because compliance would be a violation of love, not because it would involve loss or suffering."

Jesus sums up all that has preceded and lays down the rule of Charity and norm for man's dealing with his fellow men: *As you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner.* This saying of Jesus is but another form of the command: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Before the coming of Jesus, the highest perfection in this law was obtained negatively; v.g., the Rabbans said: "Do that to no man which thou hatest," and the Stoics: "What you do not wish done to you, do not so to another." Jesus makes the rule positive. The Christian must not only refrain from doing evil to his neighbor, he must also do good to them as he would have them do to him. In all circumstances the Christian must do for others what

that love them. (33) And if you do good to them that do good to you, what favor have you? for even sinners do this. (34) And if you lend to them from whom you hope to receive, what favor have you? for even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much. (35) But love your enemies, and do

he would wish others to do for him in the same circumstances.

In verses 32-34 Jesus teaches that true Christian love is disinterested. *If you love them that love you*, your love is interested and unworthy of a Christian, for sinners also love their friends. *If you do good to them that do good to you*, you do no more than natural gratitude dictates, and sinners also are moved by this consideration. *If you lend to them from whom you hope to receive, your act is inspired by selfish motives and sinners act from the same motive.* Jesus does not exclude gratitude or even self-interest; but He declares that such motives are not sufficient in a Christian. *What favor have you?* means: What reward shall you receive in the Kingdom of God; and in what way do you differ from sinners? The Christian must have higher motives; motives which will lead him to love those who do not love him, to do good to those from whom he can expect no return.

Only universal and disinterested Charity is worthy of a Christian, and only such Charity receives a reward. *Your reward shall be great*, not in this life, but in the life to come. This is the only reward a Christian should seek. Secondly, *you shall be sons of the Most High*. All men are children of God; but those animated by true principles of Charity are children of God in a special manner, for God is Love (cf. I Jo. iv, 16). They become children of God through imitation of Him *who is kind to the unthankful and to the evil*, or as St. Matthew states it: "Who maketh His sun to rise on the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and

good and lend, never despairing; and your reward shall be great, and you shall be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the unthankful and to the evil. (36) Be you merciful even as your Father is merciful.

(37) And judge not and you shall not be judged; and condemn not and you shall not be condemned; forgive and

the unjust." As no one is excluded from the love and benefits of God, so should none be excluded from the love and good works of the Christian.

*Be you merciful even as your Father is merciful*, states the perfection of Charity and places the ideal towards which the Christian should strive. The context shows that there is here a question of Charity, and especially as it is shown in works. Man cannot be as perfect as God in the same degree or according to equality; for equality cannot exist between the finite creature and the infinite Creator. Jesus has placed an ideal which is impossible of attainment. He has done so that the Christian may choose no low or earthy and human standard, that he may never rest satisfied with his own perfection but continue to strive after that which is higher and nobler, that he may be ever urged forward and upward by keeping before himself the mercy and goodness of His Heavenly Father as an incentive to greater endeavors.

JUDGING OTHERS (37-38). (Cf. Mt. vii, 1-2.) Jesus here treats of a very common violation of the Law of Charity. To pose as a general critic of one's neighbor is unchristian. Censoring and criticizing is a violation of Christian Charity, unless one's office or duty requires the judgment or correction of the neighbor.

Judge not . . . Condemn not, is the command of Jesus. Judging and condemning, in this context, are generally considered as two separate acts (v.g., SS. Augustine, Jerome, Bede). By judging is understood an inquisition and examination into a man's conduct and morals, accompanied by

you shall be forgiven. (38) Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with the same measure that you shall mete, it shall be meted to you again. (39) And he spoke also to them a parable: Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

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judgments and imputation of motives. By condemnation is understood the outward expression of this judgment, a sentence passed upon the neighbor. To harshness in criticizing and condemning, Jesus opposes the rule of forgiveness: *Forgive and you shall be forgiven*. Liberality towards one's fellow men will win liberality from God for oneself. The lack of Charity, as evidenced in judging and condemning others, is an evil disposition which hinders the workings of God's grace. He who forgives out of true Christian motives disposes himself for the grace of God.

The reward of good works is expressed in verse 38. The metaphor is taken from the measuring of grain. The measure is filled; pressed down that more may be added; shaken together to allow a further addition; and finally heaped up to overflowing. Thus does Jesus exemplify how God rewards above measure those who practice the virtue of Charity. *For with the same measure that you shall mete, it shall be meted to you again.* The tenor of man's dealings with his fellow men will establish the tenor of retribution, either good or evil.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE (39-45). (Cf. Mt. vii, 3-5, 17-18.) This subject follows naturally upon the preceding and is closely connected with it. The section is made up of metaphors and similes which must be understood according to the context in which they occur.

The first simile is that of the *blind leader*. If one blind man endeavors to lead another blind man, both come to grief. The saying on the blind leaders is also found in

(40) The disciple is not above his master; but every one when he is perfect, shall be as his master. (41) And why seest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but the beam that is in thy own eye thou dost not consider? (42) Or how canst thou say to thy brother: Brother, let me cast the mote out of thy eye, when thou seest not the beam that is in thy

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Mt. xv, 14, where it is directed against the Pharisees and has a somewhat different application than at present. Jesus has given admonitions on doing good, bestowing gifts, judging, correcting. In doing these things, a man leads his neighbor in a certain sense. That this guidance may lead to salvation and not to ruin, he who wishes to lead must possess spiritual vision, by which he knows the truth and avoids error and mistake. He must not be blind; nor attempt to guide another while in this state.

The second simile is easily understood in the context: *The disciple is not above his master.* If the master be blind and go astray, the disciple will do likewise; but if the master be perfect in vision and thus a capable guide, he will lead his disciple to perfection. And if the disciple become perfect it is because his master is also perfect. In Mt. x, 24 the metaphor has a different application. There Jesus is speaking of the persecutions He endured and foretells the same for His disciples; for they are to be like to their Master.

The third simile (41-42) is also called "the Parable of the Mote and the Beam." The *mote* is any small particle, as a straw or splinter; the *beam* is a large piece of wood. When they are used to designate the character of man, the former refers to small faults and the latter to greater faults. The mote and beam are represented as being in the eye, because of the figure used and the instruction intended. Jesus asks why one looks at the small fault in his neighbor and does not consider his own greater faults. And He asks further: *How canst thou say to thy brother*, i.e., by what

own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam from thy own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. (43) For there is no good tree that bringeth forth evil fruit; nor an evil tree that bringeth forth good fruit. (44) For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns; nor do they

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right and on what grounds or justification do you endeavor to cast out the mote from the brother's eye, when you do not see, nor remove, the beam from your own eye? The admonition is then: *Cast out first the beam from thy own eye*, i.e., first correct your own faults, first sit in judgment upon yourself. And then, after this self-knowledge and correction, *shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote*. Jesus designates those who act otherwise as *hypocrites*, for he who corrects his neighbor thereby declares himself better than his neighbor, claims a vision that he does not possess, and usually is inspired by motives other than he professes. By self-examination and self-correction, man acquires spiritual sight, by which he is able the more rightly and surely to correct and lead his neighbor. It is well to note the degrees of emphasis: *see* the faults of others; *consider* one's own faults; *see clearly* after the correction of one's own faults.

The fourth figure is that of the Good Tree and the Evil Tree (43-44). This figure is found twice in Matthew: (a) vii, 17-19, where it is joined to the warning against false prophets to illustrate the norm by which they may be known; (b) xii, 33, where it is part of our Lord's refutation of the blasphemy of the Pharisees. In each case the figure, retaining its fundamental signification, has a slightly different application. We have already met the figure in the Gospel, iii, 9. In considering this figure, or parable, we must remember that not everything contained in the type (the image used to illustrate) is applicable to the antitype (the truth illustrated). That which is true of a tree in the



gather grapes from a bramble bush. (45) The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth that which is evil. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

(46) And why call you me: Lord, Lord; and do not the

natural order cannot be applied to man and to the moral order without restriction.

In nature there is no exception to the rule that good trees bring forth good fruit, and evil trees bring forth evil fruit. If the tree be *good*, sound and healthy, its fruit is good; if the tree be *evil*, unhealthy, the fruit will not be good. Generally speaking, we find the same rule verified in man; his conduct is good or evil, according as his dispositions and character are good or evil. The possibility of a change is not excluded, nor is it contemplated here. Neither is it said that a good man cannot do some evil, and vice versa. The rule is general, and does not consider exceptional works and acts. The application in the present context is: The teaching and correction which men give is proven by its results. As a rule, instruction or correction given by one who is incapable will not produce good results, being like an evil tree that does not bring forth good fruit. The result will correspond to the character of the correction and instruction; and this will correspond to the character of the man.

This last point is explained and applied by Jesus in verse 45. The good man will bring forth that which is good, and the evil man that which is evil, each from the treasure that is in his own heart. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The outward action of man gives evidence of his character and dispositions, the "heart" being used as a figure of man's whole interior being.

ACTIVE FAITH (46-49). (Cf. Mt. vii, 21, 24-27.) Jesus concludes the sermon with a warning against faith

things which I say? (47) Every one that cometh to me, and heareth my words, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like. (48) He is like to a man building a house, who dug and went deep, and laid the foundation upon the rock; and when a flood came, the stream beat violently upon that house and could not shake it, for it was well founded. (49) But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like to a man that built his house upon the earth, without a foundation; against which the stream beat violently, and immediately it fell, and great was the ruin of that house.

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without works and with an admonition to put the truths of faith into practice. *Lord, Lord*, is the invocation of His name, not only in prayer but in a profession of faith in Him. Hence He asks: Why do you profess faith in me and in my doctrine and not live accordingly? Man must not only believe the words of Christ but also put this faith into practice (cf. Jas. ii, 26). Jesus illustrates and impresses this doctrine upon His hearers by the parable of the two houses, one of which is built upon a foundation of stone and the other on the earth.

Every one who comes to Jesus, hears His word and puts it into practice, is like a man who built his house upon a secure foundation, digging deep and building on a rock. As such a house is able to withstand the winds and the floods, so also the man who believes and practices the teaching of Jesus is able to withstand the storms of trial and persecution. On the contrary, the man who hears and believes, but does not practice the doctrine of Christ, is like to a man who built his house upon the earth, without a foundation. Such a house cannot withstand the violence of the storm.

Various applications have been made of the details of this parable. Thus, *dug and went deep*, has been applied to the study and meditation on the life and teachings of Jesus; for the more one advances in this knowledge, the

more firmly will he be rooted in good. The *rock* is applied to the eternal, unchangeable principles of the Gospel, which alone afford a sure foundation for Christian life. The *earth* is applied to the world, for it can give no permanence to the house built upon it. The *flood and stream*, is a figure of the trials, difficulties and temptations of this life.

## Chapter VII

(1) After he had ended all his words in the hearing of the people, he entered into Capharnaum. (2) And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and at

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### *Cure of the Centurion's Servant.* VII, 1-10

This miracle is recorded in Mt. viii, 5-13, with some differences of detail, which demands immediate notice. In Mt. it is said that the centurion came to Jesus; in Lk. that he did not come. In Mt. it is said that he asked Jesus not to come to his house; in Lk. that he requested Jesus to come. In Mt. there is no mention of the ancients and the friends of the centurion. This latter difference is due to the fact that Mt. summarizes. The apparent difference in the request concerning the coming of Jesus to his house is explained by the fact that the ancients added to the message given by the centurion. The difference in regard to the action of the centurion is explained: He first sent ancients with the request and, when Jesus drew near, went forth himself (St. Chrysostom); or better, he came not at all, and what he said through the ancients and his friends is attributed to him in Mt. (St. Augustine).

A *centurion* was the commander of a hundred men. The one of whom the Gospel speaks was an officer in charge of the Roman garrison at Capharnaum. He was certainly a Gentile; for he is recommended as one who loves the Jewish nation, which would be no recommendation were he a Jew, and Jesus contrasts his faith with the faith of Israel. He had a servant, very dear to him, who was dangerously ill; suffering from palsy, as Matthew states.

the point of death. (3) And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the ancients of the Jews, desiring him to come and save his servant. (4) And when they came to Jesus, they besought him earnestly, saying: He is worthy that thou shouldest do this for him; (5) for he loveth our nation, and himself hath built us a synagogue. (6) And Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying: Lord, trouble not thyself; for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my

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Having heard that Jesus was in Capharnaum and knowing of his works, the centurion enlists His aid for the servant. Not deeming himself worthy of approaching Jesus, he sends ancients with his petitions. The *ancients of the Jews* were either the leading citizens of the city or ranking members of the synagogue; more probably the former. From the further history of the event, it is most probable that the centurion sent them to request the cure of his servant, and that the ancients added to this message. To the petition, the ancients added that Jesus should come to the home of the centurion. They also give two reasons why he is worthy of this favor: (1) His love for the Jewish nation, which was remarkable and unusual among the Gentiles, and especially among the Roman soldiers; (2) He had built them a synagogue, either the one which these ancients attended or the only one in the city. Both facts show forth the nobility of the centurion's character and his regard for the religion and worship of the One True God.

Jesus accompanies the ancients. But when the centurion sees Him approaching his house, he sends an embassy of friends, bidding Jesus not to trouble Himself to come into His house. *I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof*, is his humble profession. The Pharisees considered it a defilement to enter the house of a Gentile. Yet it does not seem that the centurion had such a high regard for

roof. (7) For which cause neither did I think myself worthy to come to thee; but say the word, and my servant shall be healed. (8) For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to one: Go, and he goeth; and to another: Come, and he cometh; and to my servant: Do this, and he doeth it. (9) When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled; and turning about to the multitude that followed him, he said: Verily, I say to you:

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Pharisaical formalism, nor that he considered Jesus an observer of this formalism. He did not deem himself worthy of being host to Jesus; and because of this same unworthiness he had not come to Jesus in the first place, but sent those whom he thought more worthy of coming into the presence of Jesus. With humility he combines great faith in the power of Jesus. He considers and believes that *only a word* on the part of Jesus is required for the cure of his servant. He continues that he is *a man subject to authority, having under me soldiers, and I say to one: Go, and he goeth, etc.* In this profession of faith there is a tacit comparison, as is evident from the context. The comparison is between two who give commands which are instantly obeyed. One of them is the centurion who, though in a subordinate position and subject to higher officers, obtains instant obedience from the soldiers and servants under him. The other, by the context, is Jesus. He is not in a subordinate position and has absolute command over the forces of nature, sickness in the present case. The tacit comparison: If I, who am in a subordinate position, have power to exact obedience from my soldiers and servants, how much greater power and authority have not you to command the forces of nature and exact obedience from them.

Upon hearing this expression of faith, Jesus expresses His admiration and contrasts the faith of the centurion with the faith in Israel: *I have not found so great faith, not even*

I have not found so great faith, not even in Israel. (10) And they who were sent, being returned to the house, found the servant in good health.

(11) And it came to pass afterwards that he went into a city that is called Naim; and there went with him his disciples and a great multitude. (12) And when he came nigh to

*in Israel.* These words are a sure indication that the centurion was a Gentile. Many have found difficulty in these words of Jesus and have devised various ways of explaining them. But difficulty vanishes if we remember that the centurion made a profession of faith in the power of Jesus to work miracles without physical presence. Secondly, Jesus is speaking only of the time during which He had been looking for faith in Israel, i.e., since the beginning of His Public Ministry. Thirdly, the comparison is not made between the centurion and each individual member, but between him and Israel in general. This is borne out by the words of Jesus recorded in Mt. viii, 11-12.

#### *Son of the Widow of Naim.* VII, 11-17

Naim is mentioned nowhere else in Sacred Scripture. It is now called *Nein* by the Arabs. The village lies about two miles west of Endor, on the north slope of Little Hermon, about a day's journey from Capharnaum. From the position of the village it could have had but one entrance, that which opens on the downward slope to the plain. The very path or road upon which the miracle was wrought can thus be identified. A short distance from the village is a burying-ground which is still used.

Sometime after the cure of the centurion's servant (ἐν τῷ ἔξῃς, lit. "in the time after"), Jesus came to Naim. He had ascended the slope of the hill with the disciples and a multitude of people and was on the point of entering the city. *The gate of the city*, may mean nothing more than

the gate of the city, behold, there was being carried out a dead man, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a great multitude from the city was with her. (13) And the Lord seeing her, had compassion upon her, and said to her: Weep not. (14) And he came near and touched the bier; and they that carried it stood still. And he said: Young man, I say to thee: Arise. (15) And he that was dead sat up and began to speak. And he gave him back to his mother. (16) And there came a fear upon them all, and they glorified God, saying: A great prophet is risen up

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the entrance to the village. A funeral procession comes forth from the town. With a few strokes of the pen, St. Luke has drawn a vivid picture of the sorrowful scene. The dead was a young man and an only son. The bitterness of the mourning for an only son is frequently emphasized in the Scriptures (v.g., Jer. vi, 26). To this is added the fact that his mother is a widow, being thus left alone and deprived of all means of support. A great multitude of people from the city accompanied her, their compassion being excited by her great sorrow.

When Jesus saw the widow, He was moved with compassion and bids her not to weep. Coming near, He laid His hands on the bier. Those who carried the body stood still; something in the Lord's manner indicated His wish. As the two multitudes looked on at this interruption of the procession, Jesus gave the command: *Young man, I say to thee: Arise.* The word of power is spoken in His own name and by His own authority. He commands the dead because He is the Lord of life and death, whose voice the dead hear and obey. The word of Jesus has immediate effect. He who had been dead is restored to life and to the use of his faculties.

The account closes with a statement of the effect of the miracle upon those who beheld it. *There came a great fear*



among us, and God hath visited his people. (17) And this report of him went forth throughout all Judea and all the region round about.

(18) And John's disciples told him all these things.

*upon them*, a religious fear, awe at the manifestation of divine power. This fear is explained in the words: *They glorified God*. They drew the conclusion that Jesus was a great prophet. *Prophet*, in the language of Sacred Scripture, means not only one who foretells the future but also any representative of God. And they declare that *God hath visited His people*, i.e., God has shown favor to His people by sending this great prophet. The report of the miracle spread throughout the surrounding neighborhood and even to Judea.

#### *The Embassy from St. John. VII, 18-23*

This incident is also given in Mt. xi, 2-6. In Mt. the account opens with the statement that St. John was in prison. This is not mentioned in Lk., for it was previously stated (iii, 20). St. John seems to have enjoyed some freedom; at least his disciples had access to him.

What was the motive of St. John in asking Jesus if He were the Messiah? (1) Some say that his faith in Jesus was wavering. This view is contradictory to the Gospels. For St. John had proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, had witnessed the descent of the Holy Ghost and had heard the voice of the Heavenly Father, so that he was certain with the certainty of divine revelation. The miracles of Jesus were the occasion for sending the disciples to ask Him this question; and certainly the mighty works of Jesus would cause no one to doubt in Him. And finally, the eulogy which Jesus pronounced upon St. John must exclude any wavering of faith. (2) Some say that St. John was becoming impatient with Jesus and desired to have Him manifest Himself more openly. This view must be rejected because it is contrary to the character of St. John. It also supposes that he had an incorrect idea of the Messiah, and that he lost sight of his relations

(19) And John called to him two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord, saying: Art thou he that cometh, or must we look for another? (20) And when the men were come unto him, they said: John the Baptist hath sent us to thee, saying: Art thou he that cometh, or must we look for another? (21) In that same hour, he cured many of their diseases, and hurts, and evil spirits; and to many of the blind he gave sight. (22) And answering, he said to them: Go

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to Jesus. Finally, this view makes a demand out of the question. (3) The common view among the Fathers and Catholic commentators is that John sent the disciples that they might be brought to faith in Jesus. The disciples of John were jealous of Jesus (cf. Jo. iii, 25 f.). On the other hand, St. John endeavored to instruct his disciples and lead them to Jesus; in fact, the first disciples came to Jesus from St. John. And now he makes another endeavor to detach them from himself. He sends them in his own name in order that they might not fear to approach Jesus and that they might attend more closely to what Jesus gave as a reply to the question. By the very fact that the question came from St. John and was publicly asked, he gives another testimony to Jesus.

When his disciples brought him word of the many miracles of Jesus, St. John sends two of them to ask Jesus: *Art thou he that cometh*, i.e., art thou the Messiah? "He who comes" or "The Coming One," was a title of the Messiah (cf. Gen. xlix, 10; Mal. iii, 1; Ez. xxi, 27), and was in frequent use at that time (cf. Mt. iii, 11; Mk. xi, 9; Lk. xiii, 35; Hebr. x, 37).

When the disciples came to Jesus, they found Him engaged in working miracles. St. Luke mentions the miracles under four distinct heads: the cure of lingering illness, of acute suffering, the driving out of devils, the restoring of sight to the blind. Jesus permits them to witness these miracles, and then bids them to relate to St. John what they have seen and heard. St. John had not told them that it

and relate to John what you have heard and seen: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, to the poor is the Gospel preached. (23) And blessed is he whosoever shall not be scandalized in me.

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was in their interest that he sent them; and so Jesus directs them to carry the reply to St. John. The reply of Jesus is a declaration that He is the Messiah; for the appeal to His works can mean nothing else than that these works prove Him to be the Messiah. The supposition that the disciples could not understand the reply is unfounded. From the language of the Scriptures and of the times, they knew that the question concerned Jesus as the Messiah; and the answer of the miracles of Jesus can be understood in no other way than as an affirmation. The reply of Jesus contains a reference to Is. xxxv, 5-6 and lxi, 1. Hence, Jesus adduces as proof that He is the Messiah not only miracles but also the prophecies of the Old Law.

Jesus adds to the message: *Blessed is he whosoever shall not be scandalized in me.* Scandal, in its original meaning, is anything that causes one to stumble or fall. It is now used of that which causes the sin, or spiritual fall, of another. To take scandal, or to be scandalized, means to be led into sin by the example of another. Jesus was not a cause of scandal as we now understand the term. But the humility of His life, His sufferings and death, gave offense to many, i.e., because of this they did not believe in Him.

### *The Eulogy on St. John.* VII, 24-28

Cf. Mt. xi, 7-11. After the disciples of St. John departed, Jesus spoke of him to the people. This eulogy contains the highest praises bestowed upon anyone, the Blessed Mother excepted. Jesus praises St. John's courage and strength of character, his high morality and calling, his conscientious fulfillment of duty. But our Lord's words

(24) And when the messengers of John had departed, he began to speak to the multitude concerning John: What went you out into the desert to see? a reed shaken by the wind? (25) But what went you out to see? a man clothed in soft garments? Behold they that are in costly apparel and live delicately are in the houses of kings. (26) But what went you out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say to you, and more

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were meant not only as a commendation of St. John but also as an instruction for the people.

Jesus recalls the days of St. John's preaching and asks the people what they went out into the desert to see. Was it to see *a reed shaken by the wind*? The manner in which the question is put demands a negative answer. They had not gone out to see the reeds on the banks of the Jordan; for such a sight would have no attraction. St. John had nothing in common with the reed that is bent hither and thither with every gust of the wind. He was firm and unshaken; he was not disturbed or influenced by every gust of opinion or by opposition and persecution.

They had not gone out into the desert to see a weakling. Was it to see *a man clothed in soft garments*? No; for the desert is not the place in which to seek a man given to luxury. Such a one is to be found in the palaces of kings. St. John taught penance not only by word but also by example. His food was locusts and wild honey, and his clothing was made of camel's hair (cf. Mt. iii, 4; Mk. i, 6).

Jesus repeats the question and asks whether they had gone forth to see a prophet. This He answers in the affirmative and adds that John was *more than a prophet*. St. John was more than a prophet, for he was the object of prophecy. It was of him that the prophet Malachias had spoken (iii, 1). This prophecy is quoted by Jesus in verse 27. St. John was more than a prophet because he went before the Messiah, spoke of Him as coming and pointed Him out as

than a prophet. (27) This is he of whom it is written: Behold, I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. (28) For I say to you: Among them that are born of woman, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist. But he that is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he.

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present, and prepared the way for Him. "Many stars go before the day and announce the coming of dawn; but none merits the name Morning Star except the one that comes with the dawn; and so all prophets go before Christ and announce His coming, but John alone merits the name Precursor because he not only announced the coming of Christ but also pointed to Him as present" (Op. Imp.).

The greatness of John is such that Jesus declares *among those born of woman*, i.e., among men, there was no greater prophet than he. The text and context shows that Jesus is speaking of the prophets of the Old Law and comparing St. John with them. The point of comparison here lies in office and dignity. *But he that is least in the Kingdom of God is greater than he.* The words are somewhat obscure and various opinions have been advanced. The key to their understanding is to be found in the words "Kingdom of God." The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of the Messiah which Jesus came to establish. And since the comparison of St. John with the prophets was in the point of dignity and office, so also is the comparison between him and the members of the Kingdom made under the same aspect. Jesus declares that the least member of His Kingdom is greater than St. John in dignity. St. John was the "friend" of the Bridegroom, but the least member of the Kingdom is His spouse; St. John was a servant, but the least Christian is a son. The dignity of the New Law, to which Christians belong, as compared with the Old Law, to which St. John belonged, is

(29) And all the people hearing, and the publicans, justified God by being baptized with John's baptism. (30) But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the counsel of God for themselves by not being baptized by him. (31) To what then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? (32) They are like to children sitting in the market place and crying to one another and saying: We have piped to you and you have not danced; we wailed and you did not weep. (33) For John the Baptist came neither

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set forth by St. Paul in Gal. iii, 19; iv, 1-7, 22-32; Hebr. x, 20; Eph. ii, 14-16; Rom. iv, 25.

### *Inconstancy of the Pharisees. VII, 29-35*

Cf. Mt. xi, 16-19. Following upon the eulogy, and forming one discourse with it, is a condemnation of the inconstancy of the Pharisees. Verses 29 and 30 have been considered by some as a parenthetical remark of St. Luke. But they are to be taken as a continuation of the discourse of Jesus. The introductory words, "and He said," found in Douay and Vulgate at the beginning of verse 31 are not in the Greek text, nor in the ancient versions. Verse 31 is closely connected with verses 29 and 30 and a continuation of the thought contained in them. If these verses do not contain the words of Jesus, it is almost impossible to understand the consequence expressed in verse 31.

In verses 29 and 30 Jesus calls attention to the different manner in which the people and the Pharisees received St. John. The former *justified God by being baptized with John's baptism*. They yielded to grace and were baptized; and thus, as it were, they approved of the counsel of God contained in the mission of St. John. But the Pharisees and the lawyers *rejected the counsel of God*. They rejected the grace of God, refused to acknowledge their sinfulness or to receive the baptism of John. From this action of the Pharisees and the lawyers, Jesus passes to a parable which illustrates the inconstancy and the prejudice of the Pharisees.

*To what then, shall I liken the men of this generation?* introduces a consequent thought or idea; and the thought contained in the following parable is consequent upon the action of the Pharisees who rejected both St. John and Jesus.

THE WAYWARD CHILDREN (32-35). For illustration and comparison Jesus takes the children at their games. The present generation, in particular the Pharisees, are like to children playing in the market place. They cry to one another: *We have piped to you and you have not danced; we wailed and you did not weep.* Like children of all times and lands, the children of that day amused themselves by mimicking their elders. In the present instance they are represented as desiring to play at weddings and funerals. Weddings, with flute playing and dancing, and funerals, with wailing and lamentation, are expressions of the extremes of joy and sorrow. But the children cannot agree upon a game; a quarrel arises and, as a result, no game will be played.

To understand the meaning of this parable, we must remember that the whole image must be applied to the whole truth illustrated by that image. Persons are not compared to persons; but action is compared to action. The action of the Pharisees is like to the action of these children. Neither is part compared to part, but the whole action of the children is compared to the entire course of action on part of the Pharisees. One group of children does not represent St. John and another group Jesus; neither do the children, as a group, represent both John and Jesus. Both these ideas are contrary to the image; for groups are not distinguished. The children speak to each other and not to a third party, and they are said to represent the Pharisees and not St. John and Jesus. All the children represent the Pharisees, and their complaints represent the complaints of the Pharisees. St. John came with severity and preached penance; but they wanted mildness, they would not "weep."

eating bread not drinking wine, and you say: He hath a devil. (34) The Son of Man is come eating and drinking, and you say: Behold, a man that is a glutton and a wine-

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Jesus came with mildness and received all with kindness, but they then wanted severity. Desiring neither severity nor mildness, they followed neither St. John nor Christ; and as a consequence, they do not come to salvation. This is explicitly declared in the following verses which are so closely connected with the parable that they must be considered its explanation and application.

Jesus declares that *John the Baptist came neither eating nor drinking wine*. He did not partake of the ordinary food of man and he drank no wine. He taught penance by word and example. But the severity of St. John did not induce the Pharisees to enter the Kingdom of God. They endeavored to cast doubt on his mission and sought to excuse themselves by declaring that *he hath a devil*. This base contumely seems to have been their favorite subterfuge in escaping necessary consequences. They wished not the severity of the Baptist, and declared it the work of the devil.

Yet behold, the *Son of Man is come eating and drinking*. So far as food and drink was concerned, Jesus followed the ordinary ways of man. He did not dwell in the deserts nor avoid the companionship of men. He mingled freely with all that He might gain all for the Kingdom by His mildness and condescension. But the Pharisees complained and spoke all manner of evil against Him, declaring Him guilty of crimes and ascribing evil motives to His actions. Jesus is too kind; they now want severity. This is their inconsistency and their hypocrisy. They complain that John was too severe, and they complain that Jesus was too mild; they condemn the lack of mildness in John and condemn the lack of severity in Jesus; they declare the severity of John something evil, and they declare the kindness of Jesus



bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. (35) And wisdom is justified by all her children.

(36) And one of the Pharisees desired him to eat with him. And he went into the house of the Pharisee and sat down

immoral. They desire always to have the opposite and they condemn each as it is offered to them.

Jesus closes the discourse with the statement: *Wisdom is justified by all her children*. "Wisdom" here is the Divine Wisdom manifested in the different methods of St. John and Jesus and their invitations to enter the Kingdom of God. The "children of wisdom" are those who embrace wisdom, that is, those who accept the invitation and call to salvation. They "justify" wisdom, acknowledge this to be the wisdom of God; or, they show forth the wisdom of God, some being converted by the severity of St. John and others by the mildness of Jesus.

### *Conversion of the Sinner.* VII, 36-50

The present narrative, which shows forth the kindness and mercy of Jesus in receiving sinners, is introduced without any indication of time and place. Some favor Naim as the scene of the incident because it was the last city named. Others prefer Capharnaum because the woman was a sinner in "the city" and Capharnaum is mentioned soon after. Still others prefer Magdala, a town of ill-repute near Capharnaum, on the supposition that the sinner mentioned is Mary Magdalen. It is certain that the event occurred in Galilee, for the entire section of the Gospel treats on our Lord's work in Galilee.

A certain Pharisee invited Jesus to dine with him; and Jesus accepted the invitation. It is perhaps saying too much to assert that this Pharisee was positively opposed to Jesus and had some sinister motive in inviting Him. On the other hand, it is saying too much to assert that he was well disposed towards Jesus, for the account shows that he did not

to meat. (37) And behold, a woman who was in the city, a sinner, when she knew that he sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment. (38) And standing behind his feet weeping, she began to wash his feet with her tears and wiped them away with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.

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show Jesus the ordinary marks of courtesy. Most likely his invitation was given out of curiosity. He had heard much of Jesus; and he would have Him as a guest so that he might test the truth of the reports.

*A woman who was in the city a sinner.* The exact meaning of the phrase is not quite clear. Either she was known in the city as a sinner; or simply, she was in the city. While she is designated under the general term "sinner," yet this term, used without qualification of a woman, means one who has fallen into sins against the sixth commandment. Simon intimates as much; and Jesus does not deny that the woman had an evil past, speaking of her "many sins." It seems, as the text implies, that she had sought an opportunity of meeting Jesus. The supposition that she witnessed the cold reception accorded Jesus and desired to supply the office of courtesy is contrary to the text. She had heard of Jesus; had most likely listened to His teachings. She was brought to a consciousness of her guilt and was filled with a desire of obtaining pardon from Him. When He was in the house of the Pharisee, she resolved to make there her confession of guilt and obtain pardon.

She brought with her an *alabaster box*, a container made of alabaster, in which was preserved the more precious ointments. She readily perceived the place where Jesus was at table. *Standing behind*, because the custom of reclining at table with the feet away from the table, she washed His feet with the tears of repentance and wiped them with the

(39) Now the Pharisee who had invited him, seeing it, spoke within himself, saying: This man, if he were a prophet, would surely know who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, that she is a sinner. (40) And Jesus answering, said to him: Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. But he said: Master, say it. (41) A certain lender had two debtors; the one owed five hundred denarii and the other fifty. (42) And because they had not wherewith to pay, he forgave them both. Which therefore of them will love

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hair of her head. Having given expression to her sorrow, she gives marks of her great respect and reverence for Jesus. She kissed His feet and poured upon them the precious ointment she brought with her. "What she had abused in the service of sin, she now uses in the service of Christ and in declaration of her penance" (St. Bede).

The Pharisee looked upon this scene without understanding. He reprehends the woman and finds fault with Jesus. He reasons that if Jesus were a prophet, he would surely know what manner of woman this was who touched Him. This thought of Simon seems to indicate the spirit in which he had invited Jesus; and now he thinks that he has found reason to suspect that Jesus is not a prophet. According to the Pharisees, the touch of a sinner was contaminating; and since Jesus permitted the woman to approach Him, Simon argues that He did not know her character.

Jesus gives immediate proof that He is a prophet. He not only knows the woman's past but also her present state; and He also reads the thought of Simon. In reply, Jesus speaks the short parable of the two debtors (41-43). A certain money lender had two debtors, one of whom owed him five hundred denarii and the other fifty. As neither was able to pay their debt, the creditor forgave both. Jesus then asks Simon which of the two debtors will love the creditor most; and Simon gives the obvious answer that he

him most? (43) Simon answering, said: I suppose he to whom he forgave most. And he said to him: Thou hast judged rightly. (44) And turning to the woman, he said to Simon: Dost thou see this woman? I came to thee in thy house; thou gavest me no water for my feet, but she with tears hath washed my feet, and with her hairs hath wiped them; (45) thou gavest me no kiss, but she, since I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet; (46) my head with oil thou

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who was forgiven most will love most. Jesus confirms the answer: *Thou hast judged rightly*. Many construe the answer of Jesus as a condemnation of Simon; others see in it an emphasis on the fact that benefits beget gratitude and love. To apply it to the present circumstances: Simon had seen the marks of love and reverence shown by the woman; and from this he should have concluded that she had received, or now sought, a great favor from Him. Conscious of her sin, she had a firm hope of receiving pardon from Jesus, whose mercy towards sinners she knew and by whose doctrine she had been led to renounce sin. Thus had she received benefits which were the assurance of pardon. Since there is here only a question of pardon for the woman, the two debtors do not represent her and the Pharisee; and he is not said to have little forgiven him.

Jesus now speaks of the woman and contrasts her action with the action of the Pharisee. He reminds him that He came to him as his guest: *I came to thee in thy house*; and not as the guest of this woman. It was customary for guests to remove their sandals on entering a house, whereupon a servant washed their feet. This mark of courtesy Simon had omitted; but the woman had bathed His feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. The usual sign of good will and respect given a guest was the kiss of peace. Simon had also neglected this; but the woman had kissed His feet. The anointing of the head with oil was a mark of special

didst not anoint, but she with ointment hath anointed my feet: (47) Wherefore I say to thee: Her many sins are forgiven, because she hath loved much. But to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less.

(48) And he said to her: Thy sins are forgiven. (49) And

honor. Simon had not paid this honor to Jesus; but the woman had anointed His feet, not with oil but with precious ointment.

*Wherefore I say to thee: Her many sins are forgiven, because she hath loved much.* This verse has been the subject of much controversy because it does not seem in keeping with the parable that preceded. The conclusion of the parable was: He loves most to whom most is forgiven; here the conclusion is: She is forgiven because she loved much. The interpretation: "Many sins are forgiven her *and* she loves much," or: "Her love shows *that* many sins are forgiven her," cannot be correct. They do violence to the text, (a) by taking away the natural meaning of "because" ὅτι, (b) by disregarding the connecting particle "Wherefore" οὖν ἕαριν, (c) by introducing things not warranted by the text, as a double statement where there is only one. The natural and obvious meaning and sense of the words are: Her sins are forgiven because of her great love. Perfect love was antecedent to the pardon and its cause; and the pardon was again the cause of greater love. The parable brought home to Simon how wrong his opinion of the woman was. Though she had sinned, she had been restored to grace. For as the greater measure of the debtor's love is a sign of greater remission of debt, so the proof of this woman's love should have shown him that she had received a great favor, the forgiveness of her sins.

Jesus now addresses the woman: *Thy sins are forgiven.* As on a former occasion, so also now the Pharisees take objection and offense at this sentence of Jesus. Jesus ignores

they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves: Who is this that even forgiveth sins? (50) But he said to the woman: Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

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their thoughts and reassures the repentant sinner: *Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.* That faith is now said to have saved her does not contradict our interpretation of verse 47. Her faith in the mercy of Jesus, her confidence that she would obtain pardon, won forgiveness. Through faith she hoped to obtain pardon, through faith she begot the love by which she obtained pardon. It was not faith alone, but faith operative by love. She is no longer to be troubled or fearful; for the sins of the past are forgiven and she may go now in peace with herself and with God.

ANOINTINGS OF JESUS. In connection with the present event, the question is raised: How many times was Jesus anointed during life? In Mt. xxvi, 7, Mk. xiv, 3, and Jo. xii, 3 we read that Jesus was anointed by Mary, the sister of Lazarus, in the home of Simon the Leper at Bethany, six days before the last Pasch. It is certain that Mt., Mk., Jo., refer to one and the same anointing. This can be seen by a comparison of their accounts. We also hold as certain that St. Luke speaks of a different anointing. Jesus was twice anointed during life: once in Galilee, as here recorded; and once at Bethany in Judea, as recorded in the other Gospels.

That Jesus was anointed twice is proven by the difference in the accounts of Lk. and the others. The differences are: (1) The anointing in Lk. took place in Galilee, in the other Gospels in Bethany of Judea; (2) The anointing in Lk. is placed in the second year of the Public Ministry, in the other Gospels at the close of the third year; (3) The anointing woman in Lk. is a stranger, in the other Gospels she is an honored friend; (4) In Lk. the anointing woman receives pardon of her sins, in the other Gospels there is no mention of sin; (5) In Lk. the guests complain because Jesus forgave sin, in the other Gospels the apostles complain that the woman had wasted the ointment. There are but two points of similarity between Lk. and the other Gospels: (1) The host bears the name Simon; (2) A woman

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anoints Jesus. As to the first, it proves nothing; for Simon was a very common name among the Jews, no less than 10 men bearing that name in the New Testament. As to the second, there is nothing to prevent this act of courtesy and reverence being accorded Jesus twice.

## Chapter VIII

(1) And it came to pass afterwards, that he went through the cities and villages, preaching and evangelizing the Kingdom of God; and with him the twelve, (2) and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary who is called Magdalen, out of whom seven devils

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### *The Ministering Women.* VIII, 1-3

The present narrative is entirely new, and is distinct from the preceding; for it is introduced with the words, "it came to pass." St. Luke gives a summary account of one of our Lord's missionary tours. Jesus went through the cities and towns of Galilee, preaching the Kingdom of God. On this journey He was accompanied by two friendly groups. The twelve apostles, whom He had chosen (vi, 13 f.) and whom He was now instructing, followed Him. They did not preach at this time; for their sending to preach is recorded later.

Besides the apostles, there were also certain women in the company. These women had been cured of various infirmities and freed from evil spirits. As a testimony of their gratitude they supplied Jesus' and the apostles' needs while they were preaching. These needs were few and simple; but they had to be supplied with food and clothing. Mention is made of three of these women.

*Mary who is called Magdalen* is the most prominent among the Ministering Women. The surname is derived from her native town of Magdala. It is said that *seven devils were gone forth* from her. Some have given these



were gone forth, (3) and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, who ministered unto him of their substance.

(4) And when a very great multitude was gathered together, and they of every city resorted unto him, he spoke by a parable: (5) The sower went out to sow his seed. And

words a symbolic interpretation in the sense that she was freed from all manner of vice. Lk. xi, 26 cannot be adduced in favor of this view; for there the expression "seven devils" occurs in a parable, while here the expression is used in speaking of historical facts. Besides, the context shows that Mary Magdalen was one of those freed from evil spirits; and Mk. xvi, 9 characterizes her by the same detail. It should be remembered that possession does not necessarily imply an evil life. There is nothing in the Gospels to show that the demoniacs had lived specially evil lives; and they speak of one who was possessed from infancy (cf. Mk. ix, 20).

*Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward*, is mentioned again among the women who came to anoint the body of Jesus (Lk. xxiv, 10). The Herod meant is probably Antipas, and his steward would be the manager of his household and estate. *Susanna* is not again mentioned by name in the New Testament.

### *Parable of the Sower.* VIII, 4-18

Cf. Mt. xiii, 3-23 and Mk. iv, 3-21. The place where Jesus spoke this parable is the shores of Lake Genesareth. Mt. and Mk. state that Jesus went into a boat and taught the multitudes in parables. Mt. gives seven and Mk. three parables. Lk. gives one parable in this place.

The figure used is that of a man who went forth to sow seed in his field. As the sower scattered the seed, it fell

while he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down and the birds of the air devoured it. (6) And other fell upon rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. (7) And other fell among thorns; and the thorns growing up with it, choked it. (8) And other fell upon good ground; and being sprung up, yielded fruit a hundredfold. Saying these things, he cried out: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

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upon various kinds of ground. *Some fell by the wayside*, i.e., upon the path that ran through the field. It was trodden down and the birds ate it. *Some fell upon a rock*, i.e., upon ground strewn with rocks, such as would be found in Galilee. It sprang up rapidly, but soon withered and died because it had no firm root. *Some fell among thorns*. Here the ground is good and the seed sends forth roots and sprouts. But thorns are also growing in the same ground and, outstripping the grain, deprive it of light and air. *Other fell on good ground*, ground which offered no obstacle to the growth of the seed; and being sprung up the seed yielded fruit a hundred-fold. At the close of the parable Jesus adds the admonition: *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*. He draws attention to the truth and lesson contained in the parable and to arouse His hearers to seek further instruction.

The apostles asked Jesus to explain the parable. According to Matthew they ask the reason for speaking in parables. Since both Matthew and Luke give an answer to both questions at the same time, we are to conclude that the apostles asked both at the same time. According to Matthew the questions were asked after Jesus had dismissed the people and when He and the apostles were alone.

SPEAKING IN PARABLES (10). (Cf. Mt. xiii, 13-15.) Jesus first declares that to the apostles was given *to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God*. Full knowl-

(9) And his disciples asked him what this parable might be. (10) But he said: To you is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to the rest in parables, that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.

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edge is given them because they were in earnest and sought such knowledge. They were later to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom. For this reason He had chosen them, and for this reason He gave them special instruction. Others did not receive such clear instruction; to them Jesus spoke in parables.

The reason is given: *That seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.* St. Luke gives only the substance of the reply. The question of the apostles supposes that on that day there had been something out of the ordinary in the teaching of Jesus. He had used parables before; but on former occasions they had not asked the reason. Then the parables were introduced to illustrate some truth which had, in some way, been indicated by the circumstances or introduction. In the present instance, Jesus followed a different method. The parable began without any indication of the truth illustrated by it; and in addition to this parable, Jesus gave several others at the same time. The entire discourse, or the greater portion of it, had been a series of such figures. Under these figures Jesus presented the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but He used figures that were not understood without some explanation.

Jesus had a special reason for speaking in parables. And it was that the people might see the image and not understand the truth; that they might hear the words and not understand their meaning. The reason here given, especially as recorded by Matthew, implies the professed unbelief of the leaders and of a great part of the people. They

(11) Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. (12) And they by the wayside are they who have heard; then the devil cometh and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved. (13) And

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had already rejected His teaching; and in punishment for their unbelief, fuller and clearer instruction is denied them. But to the justice of God we must also add His mercy. For while the speaking in parables was a punishment, it saved them from greater condemnation. To those who were well disposed the parables brought light; if not immediately, at least after they had reflected on them or sought an explanation as the apostles did. The parables have, in a sense, two quite different aspects: one luminous, the other obscure. In this respect they are like the cloud and pillar of fire that gave light to the Hebrews and hid them from the Egyptians. They have been compared to the husk that preserves the grain in a two-fold manner: *From* the idle and *for* the industrious.

EXPLANATION OF THE PARABLE (11-15). (Cf. Mt. xiii, 19-23; Mk. iv, 14-20.) *The seed is the word of God*, i.e., the seed is a figure of truth contained in the Word of God, the Gospel. The sowing of the seed represents the preaching of the Gospel. Not the entire Gospel, nor the Word of God in all respects, is here illustrated; but only in so far as an analogy exists between the fate of the seed and the effects or fruits of preaching the Gospel. And this is further based upon the different kinds of ground, which are analogous to the various classes of people who hear the Gospel preached. To go beyond this is to do violence to the image and to its explanation as given by Jesus.

*They by the wayside* represent those who are hearers only. The Word falls upon their ears but does not penetrate into their hearts. They are indifferent and not receptive of the Word of God. As the birds have no difficulty in picking

they on the rock are they who, when they have heard, receive the word of joy, and these have no roots; they believe for a time, and in the time of temptation fall away. (14) And that which fell among thorns are they who have heard and going their way, are choked with the cares and

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up the seed that lies by the wayside, so also the devil has little difficulty in taking away, i.e., diverting their minds from the Word. It does not follow that Satan has nothing to do with the other classes of hearers. In the case of others he has something more to do than merely remove the memory of the Word. They have received the Word; and he must come against them with the weapons at his disposal.

*They on the rock* represent a second class of hearers. The stony ground afforded a foothold for the seed and it showed signs of growth, but it withered away through lack of firm roots. Such not only hear the Word but also receive it with joy and give promise of good results. As the seed sprang up rapidly, so also do these quickly make resolutions, the first sign of spiritual growth. But their resolutions remain mere resolutions, for the Word has awakened their emotions but not moved their wills. They are superficial, lacking in earnestness and willingness. They fall away as soon as difficulties arise, as soon as their resolutions demand something difficult from them.

*That which fell among thorns* represents a third class who also give signs of good results. The ground is good but has not received the proper attention; for it contained a hidden enemy at the time of sowing. These are they who hear the Word with good will. It enters their heart, takes root and begins to grow. But the heart contains a hidden enemy, the passions, which await an opportunity of manifesting themselves. They take root, grow strong unless checked, and gradually suffocate the Word of God. *The cares, riches*

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riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruit. (15) But that on good ground are they who in a good and perfect heart, having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit in patience.

(16) Now no man, having lit a lamp, covereth it with a vessel or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it upon a stand, that they who come in may see the light. (17) For nothing

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*and pleasures of the world*, objects sought by the passions, kill off the sprout of virtue.

*Good ground* represents a fourth class of hearers. This ground is not only good but is also free from obstacles. Such are they who hear the Word with a good and perfect heart. They *keep it* as opposed to those who hear only; they *bring forth fruit* as opposed to those among the thorns; and *in patience* as opposed to those on stony ground. This latter word teaches that this fourth class of hearers must also overcome obstacles to the growth of the Word and remain steadfast in the face of difficulties.

The above is the primary meaning of the parable, according to the image itself and according to the explanation given by Jesus. Since the Word of God is a grace given to man, the parable may be applied, by way of further analogy, to any and all grace which man receives from God. This is a lawful application, but it remains secondary. It may be noted that the parable does not contain a comparison between the extent of the various kinds of ground in the field, and neither does the explanation of Jesus contain a word as to the size of the various classes of hearers. To make an application in this matter is to disregard the first rule of interpretation and to explain the Scripture contrary to its text.

AN ADMONITION TO THE APOSTLES (16-18).  
The admonition, following closely upon the explanation of the parable, is made up of a series of proverbs and similes, easily understood in the context. First, if a man lights a lamp, he places it upon a stand so that it may give light to

is hid that shall not be made manifest; nor is anything secret that shall not be made known and come to light. (18) Take heed therefore how you hear. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, that also which he thinketh to have shall be taken away from him.

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all who are in the house. This figure occurs also in Mt. v, 15 and Lk. xi, 33 and must be understood each time in the context in which it is used. Here the meaning is clear from the context. The apostles have received the truth from Jesus. In imparting this truth to them Jesus has, as it were, lit a lamp. He placed this light of truth upon them as upon a lamp-stand; and they must make this truth known to others. Then Jesus adds: *Nothing is hid that shall not be made manifest.* This saying, which also occurs elsewhere in the Gospels, here means that what Jesus has explained to them privately was to be made known to the whole world.

Since the apostles have been selected for the work of preaching and teaching, Jesus warns them to take heed how they hear. *For whosoever hath, to him shall be given;* whoever puts forth effort in the spiritual life and co-operates with the grace of God shall receive greater graces. *Who-soever hath not, that also which he thinketh to have shall be taken from him;* he that does not put forth such effort, shall not receive more, but shall be deprived of that which he seems to have.

#### *The Mother and Brethren of Jesus. VIII, 19-21*

Cf. Mt. xii, 46-50 and Mk. iii, 31-35. In the latter the visit of the Mother of Jesus and the "brethren" is placed before the parable of the sower. It is uncertain which of the Gospels gives the exact order of events. But from all the accounts the visit was made while Jesus was teaching in a certain house on the day He spoke the preceding parable.

(19) And his mother and brethren came unto him; and they could not come to him for the crowd. (20) And it was told to him: Thy mother and brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. (21) But answering, he said to them: My mother and my brethren are these who hear the word of God and do it.

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The Mother of Jesus and the "brethren," coming to visit Him, could not obtain access to Him because of the crowds. Word was brought to Jesus that they awaited Him. Our Lord, who took every opportunity to teach by word and example, replies: *My mother and my brethren are these who hear the Word of God and do it.* "The Master, who gave an example to others, was to teach that he who did not leave father and mother was not worthy of being His disciple; and He first follows this law, not because He disdained the solicitude of His mother but because He had greater regard for the work of the Father" (St. Ambrose).

Jesus does not send word to those who await Him; He does not leave off the work of instructing the people. He thereby teaches a three-fold lesson: Renunciation of home and kindred for the sake of God; that God is to be preferred to all others; that spiritual ties are higher and holier than mere earthly and carnal relationship. Those who do the will of God are recognized by Jesus as His mother and brethren. They are recognized as mother, because they reproduce Jesus in their own hearts and lives, by imitating Him; and as His brethren, because they are united with Him in the great family of the Heavenly Father.

The *brethren of the Lord* are His relatives. See Appendix III.

### *The Storm on the Lake.* VIII, 22-25

Cf. Mt. viii, 23-27 and Mk. iv, 35-41. According to Lk. it was on a certain day that Jesus entered a boat and ordered the apostles to



(22) Now it came to pass on one of those days, that he went into a boat with his disciples; and he said to them: Let us go over to the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. (23) But as they were sailing, he slept. And there came down a violent storm of wind upon the lake; and they were filling and were in danger. (24) And they came and awakened him, and said: Master, master, we perish! But he rising, rebuked the wind and the rage of the

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cross to the other side of the Lake. Mk. designates the time as the evening of the day upon which He spoke the parable of the sower.

As Jesus and the apostles sailed over the Lake of Genesareth, He slept. He had a true human nature, capable of feeling fatigue from a day's labor. Though He foresaw the storm, or even willed it, "He slept in order that He might exercise the future athletes of the world by fear and trepidation" (St. Chrysostom). As the boat proceeded, there came down a *violent storm of wind*, a squall from the heights which surround the lake. The waves beat upon the boat with such violence that it was in danger of capsizing. Matthew adds that the waves covered the boat.

The apostles did not arouse Jesus at the first signs of the tempest but only when the boat began to fill with water. They were fishermen acquainted with the Lake and not easily frightened by a storm. Coming to Jesus they call to Him for aid: *Master, master, we perish!* The cry of the apostles is given in different words by the Gospels; but all have the same sense. Their cry shows fear and anxiety; and under such circumstances, it is not likely that each would utter the same words, as if by previous agreement. The Gospels have given the sense of their various cries of danger.

Jesus arising, *rebuked the wind and the rage of the water*; and Matthew gives His words: "Peace, be still." In the

water; and they ceased, and there was a calm. (25) And he said to them: Where is your faith? Being afraid, they marvelled, saying one to another: Who is this, that he commandeth both the wind and the sea, and they obey him?

(26) And they landed at the country of the Gerasens, which

Old Testament, He who rebukes the winds and the waves is God (cf. Ps. ciii, 7 f.). Our Lord, standing in the boat and giving command to the forces of nature, appears in Divine power and majesty. He did not merely appear to command, neither did He command Satan through nature; but as the Lord of all, He gives command to nature, and nature obeys the power of its Creator and Lord. The storm ceased immediately and there came a great calm over the Lake.

*Where is your faith?* By calling upon Him, they manifested their faith; by fearing that they would perish, even while they called on Him for aid, they manifested a weakness in their faith. Jesus rebuked them for this weakness. They were filled with awe at the manifestation of the power of Jesus and ask one another who He might be who commands the forces of nature and obtains obedience from them. Their experience on the Lake made them realize that they had here seen the exercise of supernatural power. For even if the winds die suddenly, the water will continue agitated for some time after; but here an instant calm of both winds and waves followed upon the command of Jesus.

#### *The Gerasene Demoniac.* VIII, 26-39

Cf. Mt. viii, 28-34 and Mk. v, 1-20. The accounts differ as to the number of demoniacs; Mt. mentioning two, Mk. and Lk. speaking only of one. The statement of Mk. and Lk. does not exclude the presence of a second man but merely prescind from it. "If there were two, there was one present." Mk. and Lk. wished to speak of one only

is opposite Galilee. (27) And when he was come forth upon the land, there met him a certain man of the city who had devils; and for a long time he wore no clothes, and did not abide in any house, but in the tombs. (28) And when he saw Jesus, crying out he fell down before him, and with a

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because he was of greater distinction and the object of special sympathy (St. Augustine), or because he was more violent than the other (St. Chrysostom). The reason for singling out this one is indicated in the accounts. The demoniac, of whom Mk. and Lk. speak, wished to remain in the company of Jesus after his cure; but Jesus refused the request and commanded him to make known the miracle throughout his own country. This also gave him a prominence, because of which he alone is mentioned in the two accounts.

The authorities vary in the name of the country, calling the people the Gerasenes, the Gaderenes, the Gergesenes. The first seems to be the correct reading. The country borders on the eastern shore of Lake Genesareth.

As soon as Jesus and the apostles set foot on the land, there came forth to meet them a man possessed by the devil. He was *of the city*, does not mean that he came forth from the city, but that he belonged to the city, most probably Gerasa (Kersa). The man is described in verses 27 and 29. The man had been in possession of the devils for a long time. He wore no clothes and made his home in the tombs. Many such tombs are still found in the neighborhood of Gerasa, excavated from limestone. On many occasions the devils seized him and drove him into the deserts. In calmer moments, precautions were taken to prevent the demons carrying him away. He was bound with chains and kept in fetters. But these precautions were futile, for he broke the bonds and was driven into the deserts; "and he was always day and night in the monuments and in the mountains, crying and cutting himself with stones" (Mk.).

Such a one met Jesus when He set foot upon the land.

loud voice said: What have I to do with thee, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech thee, do not torment me. (29) For he commanded the unclean spirit to go out of the man. For many times it seized him; and he was bound with chains and kept in fetters; and breaking the bonds, he was driven by the devil into the deserts. (30) And Jesus asked him: What is thy name? But he said: Legion; because many devils were entered into him. (31) And they besought him that he would not command them to go into the abyss.

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It was perhaps with the intention of inflicting harm that the man first ran towards Jesus, for he was "exceeding fierce, so that none could pass that way" (Mt.). But Satan feels the presence of the Lord; and from verse 29, *He commanded the unclean spirit to go out*, it would seem that Jesus had given this command mentally before the man came near Him. As in the synagogue of Capharnaum (cf. iv, 34), so also here Satan cries out against Jesus, addressing Him by name and calling Him the Son of the Most High. The recorded words are not the words of the man himself, for he could have had no knowledge of Jesus. This was the first visit of Jesus to the country in which He was unknown; and the man was insane. The words proceed from one distinct from the man yet in possession of his faculties.

The present instance is the only one in which Jesus addressed the evil spirits, except to expel them. When Jesus asked his name, Satan answered: *Legion*. Though it be uncertain to whom the question was addressed, it is certain that the devil made the reply. The name was known wherever the Roman armies were known; and it was used by the devils to designate their number, both in the territory and in possession of the man, and also as a boast of their power and strength. They request that Jesus would not command them to go into the *abyss*, i.e., into hell. The demons know that they will be judged on the last day and punished with

(32) And there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain; and they besought him that he would give them leave to enter into them. And he gave them leave. (33) The devils therefore came out of the man and entered into the swine; and the herd rushed down a steep place into the lake, and were drowned. (34) And when they that fed them saw what was done, they fled away and told it in the city and in the villages.

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more severe torments (II Pt. ii, 4); and for this reason make the request; or ask "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (Mt.). Their eager wish to stay on earth at any price is expressed in their next petition.

Near by was a herd of swine to the number of about 2,000, as Mark states. The Jews were forbidden to keep swine or to eat the flesh of swine. This herd may have belonged either to Gentiles or to apostate Jews. The large majority of the people of the country of the Gerasenes were Gentiles; and many of the Jews residing in the district had given up their religious practices. The devils ask that they be permitted to enter the swine; and Jesus gave them permission. But the swine becoming frightened, ran down a steep place into the sea and were drowned.

The destruction of the swine has been the cause of much discussion and of objection. To answer the usual objections, we should remember: (1) That God has supreme dominion over all things, and that He exercised this supreme dominion in the destruction of the swine; (2) That God may permit physical evils, such as the destruction of the swine, to attain a higher purpose. Many see here a punishment. If the owners were Jews, they were punished for violating the Law. If they were Gentiles, they were punished because of scandal and inducing the Jews to violate the Law. Prescinding from the idea of punishment, the destruction of the swine may have been permitted for the salvation of souls, the highest good of man. The miracle of freeing the man and the destruction of the swine attracted wide attention,

(35) And they went out to see what was done; and they came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils were gone sitting at his feet, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. (36) And what they saw told them how he who had been possessed by the devil was healed. (37) And all the people of the country of the Gerasens besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with a great fear. And he, going up into the boat,

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showed forth the power of Jesus and the malignity of Satan. St. Thomas writes: "Christ came principally to teach and work miracles for the welfare of man, especially as regards the salvation of souls. And thus He permitted the demons to inflict harm upon man for the instruction of man." And St. Chrysostom: "Christ permitted the demons to enter the swine, that He might instruct man concerning to evil of the demons who lie in wait for men; secondly, that all might learn that the demons did not dare to do anything, not even against the swine, without His permission; and thirdly, that they would have inflicted greater evils upon men unless men had been aided by Divine Providence."

**EFFECTS OF THE MIRACLE (35-39).** Those in charge of the swine fled away into the city and the surrounding villages, bringing news of what had happened. It would seem that the swine were the property of many, and that it was to the owners that the swineherds made their report.

The people came forth to see what was done. The first sight that met their gaze was the man possessed; and what they saw told them that he had been freed from the power of Satan. A complete change had taken place. He was *sitting at His feet*, who had formerly roamed wildly about; he was *clothed*, who had formerly cast off all clothing; he was *in his right mind*, who had formerly been in the possession of the devil and driven to insanity. The people were filled with fear and asked Jesus to depart from them. They were more concerned over the destruction of the swine than

returned back again. (38) But the man, out of whom the devils were gone, besought him that he might be with him. But he sent him away, saying: (39) Return to thy house, and tell how great things God hath done to thee. And he went through the whole city, publishing how great things Jesus had done to him.

(40) And when Jesus returned, the multitudes welcomed him; for they were all waiting for him. (41) And behold,

moved by the favor Jesus bestowed upon the man and thereby also promised them. Jesus will not force Himself upon anyone; and He departed from them.

The man who had been freed from the evil spirits asks Jesus that *he might be with Him*, i.e., be His disciple and constant companion. Many reasons have been given for the request. Most probably he was moved by faith and gratitude, and did not desire to be separated from his Benefactor. His request is not granted, for Jesus has other work for him. He is commanded to return to his own house and make known the great favor that had been bestowed upon him. He is to be a continual witness of the power of Jesus. The man complied with the command of Jesus; and thus fulfilled his vocation in the Kingdom of God.

*Cure of the Woman with the Issue of Blood and the Raising of the Daughter of Jairus. VIII, 40-56*

Cf. Mt. ix, 18-26 and Mk. v, 21-43. Mt. places the miracle after the banquet which followed his call to the discipleship; Mk. and Lk. place it after the return from the country of the Gerasenes. It would seem that Mk. and Lk. have here preserved the historical order.

When Jesus returned from the country of the Gerasenes, the people welcomed Him. There came to him a certain man named Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, with the request that Jesus come to his house and save his daughter.

there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue; and he fell down at the feet of Jesus, beseeching him that he would come into his house. (42) For he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. And as he went the multitudes thronged him. (43) And there was a certain woman, having an issue of blood twelve years, who had spent all her substance on physicians and could not be healed by any, (44) came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment. And im-

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The daughter of Jairus was his only child, about twelve years old. Both Mark and Luke say that the girl was on the point of death, while Matthew states that she was dead. When the father left his house, the girl was on the point of death; he knows not whether to regard her as still alive or as dead. In his anxiety he would have expressed himself in various ways. The difference may also be explained by the fact that Matthew condenses the account. Mark and Luke give the arrivals, both of the father, who says she is dying, and of the messenger, who says she is dead.

While Jesus accompanied Jairus, a great crowd surrounded Him. In the crowd was a certain woman suffering from an *issue of blood*, i.e., from chronic hemorrhage, a disease that entailed legal defilement for the sufferer. During twelve years she had consulted many physicians and spent all her substance, but could find no relief; and as Mark says "she had suffered many things from many physicians," for the remedies then tried in such cases were severe, sometimes loathsome and absurd. She did not approach Jesus openly, but came behind and touched the *hem of His garment*, i.e., one of the tassels attached to the square overgarment or *Tallith*. The nature of her disease, considered as a result of an evil life and causing legal uncleanness, kept her from openly asking for a cure and thus making known her state before all the people. She deemed



mediately the issue of her blood stopped. (45) And Jesus said: Who is it that hath touched me? But all denying, Peter said, and they that were with him: Master, the multitudes throng and press thee (and thou asketh: Who touched me?) (46) But Jesus said: Somebody hath touched me; for I know that virtue is gone out from me. (47) And the woman seeing that she was not hid, came trembling and fell down before him, and declared before all the people for what cause she had touched him and how she was immediately cured. (48) But he said to her: Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

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it unnecessary to do more, for she reasoned: "If I shall but touch His garment, I shall be cured" (Mk.). Her faith was rewarded; for as soon as she touched the garment of Jesus, the issue of her blood stopped.

Jesus did not wish the faith of the woman and the miracle to remain unknown. He wished the fact made known to the people and so first asks that the woman give testimony to her disease and her cure. He asks: *Who touched me?* All denied that they had touched Him, i.e., intentionally; and Peter calls attention to the great crowd that surrounds Him. But Jesus repeats that some one touched Him purposely, for He adds: *I know that power is gone out from me.* By this we are not to understand that power went forth from Jesus locally; but that the power He possessed had worked an external effect of which He was fully aware.

When the woman realized that she was known, she came forward and declared the reason for which she had touched His garment and how she was instantly cured. Jesus removes her fears saying: *Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.* This is the first recorded instance of a miracle wrought by contact with the Lord's garments. Later such miracles were more frequent (cf. Mt. xiv, 36). Jesus' reply in the present case shows that the woman was

(49) While he spoke, there cometh one of the family of the ruler of the synagogue, saying: Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. (50) But Jesus hearing it, answered: Fear not; only believe and she shall be safe. (51) And when he was come to the house, he suffered not any man to go in with him, save Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the maiden. (52) And all wept and mourned for

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not superstitious, but was prompted by lively and sincere faith. Had she been superstitious and had she erroneously ascribed some magical power to the garment of Jesus, she would not have been cured and He would not have praised her faith. The woman certainly believed that Jesus could cure her, else she would not have had recourse to Him. She also believed that she could be cured if she came into contact with His garment, not because of the garment itself but through the power of Jesus whose garment it was. It was faith therefore that moved her to touch the garment, and it was this faith that Jesus praised. The answer of Jesus also contains a lesson. Not the mere external contact with the garment had cured the woman, but the faith with which this garment was touched.

Some delay was caused by the crowds and by the miracle just worked. In the meantime the girl died and preparations were begun for her burial. Jairus is informed of this by one of his servants, who remarks that the presence of Jesus will be of no avail. Hearing this, Jesus counsels the father: *Only believe and she shall be safe.* The faith of the father is a condition for the safety of his daughter, because it is for his sake that the miracle is to be wrought.

When they arrived at the house, Jesus allowed no one to accompany Him but Peter, James, John and the parents of the girl. Mark distinguishes between the entry into the house and the entry into the room where the maiden lay. In the house, the lamentations and mourning for the dead

her. But he said: Weep not; for the maiden is not dead but sleepeth. (53) And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. (54) But taking her by the hand, he cried out saying: Maiden, arise. (55) And her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. And he commanded that something be given her to eat. (56) And her parents were amazed; but he charged them to tell no man what had been done.

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had begun. Matthew and Mark, who give the scene in greater detail, remark the presence of the minstrels, hired flute players and mourners. Jesus commands them to cease their lamentations *for the maiden is not dead but sleepeth*. In the present case, death would not be of long duration; and she would be restored to life so promptly that she would seem to have been sleeping. But they laughed Him to scorn, *knowing that she was dead* and not understanding in what manner Jesus spoke of her death as a sleep. Matthew and Mark add that Jesus ordered the mourners from the house.

Entering the room where the lifeless body lay, Jesus took her by the hand and commanded: *Maiden, arise*. Mark has preserved the exact words of Jesus in Aramaic: *Talitha cumi*. By this word, she is restored to life and to perfect health. For Jesus commands the parents to provide her with food. Before leaving the house, Jesus commands the parents to tell no one of the miracle. This command was, of course, only temporary; for the miracle could not be kept a secret from those who awaited outside the house. The purpose of the command was that Jesus and the apostles might retire from the scene before the multitude knew of the miracle and thus avoid a popular demonstration.

## Chapter IX

(1) And calling together the twelve, he gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. (2) And he sent them forth to preach the Kingdom of God and to

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### *The Mission of the Apostles. IX, 1-10*

Cf. Mt. x, 1-42 and Mk. vi, 7-11. None of the Gospels give a definite time for the mission of the apostles; but this may be gathered from their accounts. Lk. follows the mission of the apostles with an account of their return; Mk. does likewise; Mt. merely records the instructions given when they were sent forth to preach. According to Mk. and Lk. it was during this mission that the curiosity of Herod was aroused, as we shall see in the course of the narrative. Further Mk. and Lk. state that John the Baptist was put to death about this time. Finally all three state that the return of the apostles and the report they brought of the death of St. John was followed by the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. This miracle took place at the time of the Pasch. Consequently, the apostles returned from their mission shortly before the Pasch, the third of the Public Ministry and the end of the second year of this Ministry of Jesus.

The present mission of the apostles was what might be called their apprenticeship. They were sent to preach and to work miracles; the loftier duties of their office were reserved for a later time. They had heard the preaching of Jesus and had received special instruction from Him. They possessed the required knowledge. Jesus transmits to them power of working miracles. These miracles were to serve as their credentials. Thus fortified, they are sent forth to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. Luke gives only a part of the instructions of Jesus.

heal the sick. (3) And he said to them: Take nothing for your journey; neither staff, nor wallet, nor bread, nor money; neither have two coats. (4) And into whatsoever house you shall enter, abide there; and depart thence. (5) And whosoever receiveth you not, when you go out of the city, shake off even the dust from your feet for a testi-

Jesus first instructs them as to their mode of travel: *Take nothing for your journey*, i.e., they are to make no preparations for the journey, but to go as they were. Matthew opens the instruction with the words, "do not procure" (μὴ χρήσασθε). The three accounts are substantially the same, and mean that they are to make no special preparations. They are not to provide themselves with food, money or extra clothing. They were to occupy themselves entirely with the work of preaching the Gospel; and were to rely upon Divine Providence and the charity of those to whom they preached.

Jesus instructs them on receiving hospitality. *Into whatsoever house you shall enter, abide there*. If on entering a city, as Matthew states in greater detail, one of the citizens offers them hospitality, they are not to refuse. And having entered the house, they are to abide there and not to seek another place. *And depart thence*, i.e., they are to depart from the city from the same house which they entered on coming to the city. This advice is given that they might not offend their host and might not appear to be seeking their own ease and comfort.

Jesus intimates that they will not be well received in some places; and admonishes them that, in such a case, they are to *shake off even the dust from your feet, for a testimony against them* (cf. Ac. xiii, 51). The very ground was considered contaminated by the sins of the inhabitants; and the shaking off of the dust of a city or country from one's feet was a declaration that the inhabitants were guilty of

mony against them. (6) And going out, they went about through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

(7) Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all the things that were being done; and he was perplexed, because it was said (8) by some, that John was risen from the dead; but by others, that Elias had appeared; but by others, that one of

sin and a sign that dealings with them were broken off. The action was symbolic of cessation of fellowship and a renunciation of any responsibility for the people. Theirs is the guilt; the apostles have done their duty.

In one sentence, St. Luke tells us that the apostles went through the cities, preaching and working miracles. We are not told how long this missionary tour lasted. The statement of verse 6 points to some considerable time; and the same may be gathered from Lk. xxii, 35.

HEROD'S DOUBT (7-9). During the mission of the apostles, the renown of Jesus was carried to the palace of Herod. These reports raised doubts in the mind of Herod and he was perplexed. As regards the person of Jesus, some said that He was St. John risen from the dead. At this point St. Mark takes occasion to record how St. John met his death (Mk. vi, 17-29). Though St. John had worked no miracles, such was the effect of his preaching and high standing with the people that some thought he was risen from the dead and working miracles. Others thought Jesus might be Elias, who was to appear again in the world, while still others thought Him to be one of the ancient prophets returned to the world.

From Matthew and Mark it seems that Herod feared that the opinion regarding the reappearance of St. John might be true. He is certain that he has done away with St. John, who denounced his wicked life. His conscience will not let him rest; it tells him that there is present another

the old prophets was risen again. (9) And Herod said: John I have beheaded; but who is this, of whom I hear such things? And he sought to see him.

(10) And the apostles, when they returned, told him all they had done. And taking them, he withdrew apart to a desert place of the city that is called Bethsaida. (11) Which when the people knew, they followed him; and he wel-

opponent of all that is evil. He expresses a desire to see Jesus. He knew St. John; and he could decide whether or not the one of whom he now heard so many things was St. John or another.

The return of the apostles is stated very briefly in our Gospel. They reported to Jesus all that they had done on their missionary tour; and comparing Mt. xiv, 13, they gave an account of the Baptist's martyrdom. Jesus took them aside from the multitude into a desert place that belonged to Bethsaida. From Mt. xiv, 13 and Mk. vi, 32, we learn that Jesus sailed over the lake with the apostles. The Bethsaida to which they retired is Bethsaida Julias on the Jordan near the northeast end of the lake.

### *Multiplication of the Loaves. IX, 11-17*

Cf. Mt. xiv, 13-21, Mk. vi, 31-44, Jo. vi, 1-15. Each of the four accounts, while agreeing substantially, have some differences in the details of the miracle. Attention will be called to these in the explanation. St. John expressly states that the miracle occurred shortly before the Feast of the Pasch.

When the people knew that Jesus had retired with the apostles, they followed Him. From Matthew and Mark we learn that Jesus crossed over the lake, while the people followed on foot from all the cities and villages round about. This following was not difficult. Jesus crossed the lake at its northern extremity and the progress of the boat could be

comed and spoke to them of the Kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing. (12) Now the day began to decline. And the twelve came and said to him: Send away the multitude, that going into the towns and villages round about, they may lodge and get victuals; for we are here in a desert place. (13) But he said to them:

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followed by those who walked along the shore. The great multitude of 5,000 men, besides women and children, is explained by the fame of Jesus; for they followed Him, says St. John, because they saw the miracles He wrought. It is further accounted for by the proximity of the Pasch, for which the people were preparing.

Though Jesus crossed the lake to find rest for Himself and the apostles, He received the people who came to Him, spoke to them of the Kingdom of God and healed their sick. He continued this work until evening was come. Since Jesus fed the people and sent them away before dark, it is most probable that the Gospels here speak of the "first evening," i.e., when the sun began to decline, about three o'clock in the afternoon.

The next stage in the four narratives of the miracle presents some difficulty. The first three Gospels state that, when evening was come, the apostles raised the question of supplying the people with food; while the Fourth Gospel states that Jesus first spoke of the matter to Philip. There is no difficulty as to the facts; the sole difference lies in the conversation between Jesus and the apostles. If we remember that Jesus retired into the desert with the purpose of working the miracle, that Mark states the apostles had not so much time as to eat before crossing the lake, and that John states that Jesus went into a mountain with the apostles, we may understand the sequence as follows. When Jesus and the apostles arrived at the northeastern shore, they retired to the hillside and there partook of food. The



Give you them to eat. And they said: We have no more than five loaves and two fishes, unless perhaps we go and buy food for this multitude. (14) For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples: Make the men sit down in companies of fifty. (15) And they did so; and made them sit down. (16) And taking the five loaves and two fishes and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and broke, and distributed to his disciples to set before the multi-

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people began to arrive and Jesus asks Philip where food may be obtained for them. Going forth then, as the first three Gospels state, Jesus taught the people and cured the sick. In the meantime, the apostles arrive at the conclusion that it was impossible to feed the people in the desert and, when evening was come, they make known their decision to Jesus. They asked that the people be dismissed in order to provide themselves with food in the villages. Jesus bids the apostles provide the food. It seems that they had weighed the matter well, for they immediately answer that 200 pennyworth of bread would not suffice. According to John, it was Andrew who pointed out the boy who had five barley loaves and two fishes. The apostles speak of this food as in their possession, most probably having obtained a promise of it.

Jesus commanded the apostles to seat the people in companies of fifty. The multitude was thus broken up and divided into manageable parts. There was less danger of confusion and neglect of some; and the apostles would be able to pass among the groups and serve all in orderly succession. When the people were arranged as at a banquet, Jesus took the five loaves and two fishes and, looking up to Heaven, blessed the food and divided it among the apostles. The Gospels do not go into detail as to the exact mode of the miracle. Most probably the food was multiplied twice, first in the hands of Jesus and then in the hands

tude. (17) And all did eat and were filled. And there were taken up of the fragments that remained to them, twelve baskets.

(18) And it came to pass as he was praying alone, the

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of the apostles. All received as much as they desired and yet there was more than was needed. Jesus having shown prodigality in the bestowing of gifts, teaches economy at the same time. He commanded the apostles to gather up the fragments that remained of the five loaves and two fishes. The twelve baskets full gathered up was more than the original amount of food.

Our Gospel ends the account rather abruptly. From Mt. and Mk. we learned that Jesus constrained His apostles to re-embark and sail across the lake. From Jo. we learn the reason. When the people beheld the miracle, they were filled with enthusiasm, declared Jesus to be the Great Prophet and desired to take Him by force and make Him king. Jesus removes the apostles from the danger and dismisses the multitude.

At this point, with the third Pasch, ends St. Luke's account of the second year of the Lord's Public Ministry. Jesus did not go to Jerusalem for the Feast, but remained in Galilee (Jo. vii, 1). Our Gospel here passes over a series of events recorded in Mt. xiv, 22-xvi, 12 and Mk. vi, 45-viii, 26.

### *The Confession of St. Peter. IX, 18-22*

Cf. Mt. xvi, 13-23 and Mk. viii, 27-33. From these two accounts we learn that the present event took place in the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi. This city lay beyond the Jordan on the northern border of the territory of Philip the Younger. In more ancient times the city bore the name of Paneas. Philip rebuilt it and called it Caesarea in honor of the Emperor. Philippi, i.e., of Philip, was added to distinguish it from Caesarea Sebaste on the Mediterranean.

Jesus was praying alone and the apostles were with Him. The contradiction here is only on the surface. The Gospel

disciples were with him; and he asked them, saying: Who do the people say that I am? (19) But they answering, said: John the Baptist; but others say: Elias; and others say: One of the former prophets is risen again. (20) And he said to them: But you, who do you say that I am? And Simon Peter answering, said: The Christ of God. (21) But strictly

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means that though the apostles were with Jesus, He alone was praying at the time. After the prayer Jesus asks them the opinions of the people concerning Him. They give the current opinions, such as were related to Herod Antipas. The people considered Jesus to be St. John risen from the dead, or Elias whose return they expected, or one of the former prophets. None, or very few, considered Him to be the Messiah. The reason was their erroneous idea concerning the Messiah and the Kingdom of the Messiah. His life and doctrine was not according to the prevalent idea of a worldly Messiah and temporal Kingdom.

After the apostles had recited the views of the people, Jesus asked them: *But you, who do say that I am?* The emphasis is marked. There is an antithesis between the people and the apostles. They had been chosen from among men, were called to the apostolate, were witnesses of many miracles and favored with the constant companionship of Jesus. From them He requires more; their faith must be further advanced and stronger than that of the people. Simon Peter answers for all: *The Christ of God*, i.e., the Anointed One of God, the Messiah. Matthew gives the answer more fully: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Peter declares that Jesus is the Messiah and that He is Divine.

Simon Peter officially and solemnly made profession of faith and proclaimed the dignity of Jesus. But Jesus commands them not to speak openly of this at present. The time was not ripe for making so important a revelation to

charging them, he commanded that they tell this to no man, (22) saying: The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the ancients and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day rise again.

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the people. Their hopes were too gross, their enthusiasm too worldly, to receive the truth. None of them expected that the Messiah would establish a purely spiritual Kingdom, that He would be rejected and slain by His own people. Had the people been told that He was the Messiah there would have been danger of complete loss of faith. But once the mystery of the Cross was consummated and all cause for unbelief put aside, and when there was nothing to disturb their faith once Jesus was risen and glorified, then the time would be propitious for proclaiming His person and character to the world.

Jesus declares that this is the reason for the command (v. 22). The Messiah will be rejected by the chief priests, scribes and ancients. All those to whom the people looked for guidance were to reject Him and put Him to death because He claimed to be the Messiah and Son of God. Thus Jesus begins to prepare the apostles for the great trial of their faith. Again and again He impressed the truth upon them that the world was to be saved through the sufferings of the Messiah; and the apostles barely withstood the trial. This was spared the people. Their vain and false hopes must not be fostered to be shattered by the Cross. The life, teaching and miracles of Jesus led them to faith in Him as a great prophet, as one sent from God. They are to see Him suffer and die, even as the prophets of old. But when the work of Redemption is accomplished, when Jesus is risen and glorified, then will their hearts and minds be ready to receive a spiritual Kingdom, then will the true character of Jesus be grasped, then will they recognize that He is indeed the Messiah and Son of God.

(23) And he said to all: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. (24) For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall save it.

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*Lessons on Self-Renunciation. IX, 23-27*

Cf. Mt. xvi, 24-28 and Mk. viii, 34-39. This instruction is meant for all times and for all people; for Jesus spoke to all, and not only to the apostles, as Mk. notes.

Jesus does not desire unwilling followers, and so He says *if any man will come after me*; the grace of God is always present to aid those who are of good will (St. Bonaventure). The disciple of Christ must *deny himself*, i.e., forget self and not seek his own advantage. A man denies himself when he turns from sin in which he sought the gratification of self; when he avoids sin in which he seeks himself; when he seeks Christ alone and rejects all that may separate him from Christ; when he does violence to himself and his desires. We have here the first mention of the *Cross* in our Gospel. The Jews knew well what it meant as an instrument of torture and death. Jesus uses the word because of its association with suffering. Suffering comes in many ways to the disciple of Christ. He is bidden to bear this cross, whatever it may be. And this *daily*, in patience and perseverance. By so doing man becomes a true imitator of the Master. Jesus bids the disciple to have Him before his eyes at all times: *And follow me*. There is here offered the consolation that bearing the cross makes one a companion of Jesus; and there is also offered the advice on the manner of bearing the cross, viz., as Jesus carried it.

Jesus shows the reason and necessity for self-denial: *Whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall save it*. Whoever wishes to live according to the world and thus save himself and

(25) For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself or cast himself away? (26) For he that shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him the Son of Man shall be ashamed when he shall come in his glory, and that of his Father, and of the holy angels. (27) But I tell you a truth: There are some of those standing here that shall not taste death till they see the Kingdom of God.

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his life for the things of the senses, by avoiding self-denial, shall lose his life by not arriving at Beatitude. On the contrary, he who sets aside the things of the world and denies himself the pleasures of this life and life itself for the sake of Christ, shall save himself in eternity. If one saves the grain, he loses it; if he sows the grain, it is renewed (St. Gregory). While this saying refers especially to laying down one's life for the sake of Christ, it has a wider application; for it is a continuation of the subject of self-denial and of carrying the cross, which have a general application.

Jesus brings out the same lesson from a different point of view, that of profit and loss. The object of man's gain, *the whole world*, is an impossibility. But even so, were it possible for him to gain all that the world can give, of what profit is it if he lose himself? The greatest gains in this life cannot be of advantage to one who loses his soul for all eternity.

The reason why those who forsake Christ shall be lost is given in verse 26: *He that shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him the Son of Man shall be ashamed.* He who does not follow Christ by faith and by the observance of His commandments acts as if he were ashamed to be known as a follower of Christ. Jesus will not recognize him as His own, but shall reject him as being put to shame through him. Jesus is therefore the only hope of salvation (cf. Ac. iv, 12); for whoever is not acknowledged by Him shall be lost. Jesus describes His Second Coming, when He shall pass

judgment on all mankind. He shall come in *His glory*, which is His as Man, the glory due to the human nature because of its union with the Divinity (cf. Phil. ii, 9). He shall come in the glory of *His Father*, because He shall appear in the glory that is His as the eternal Son of God. And in the glory of the *holy angels*, who shall form His court and attendants.

From the mention of the Second Coming Jesus passes suddenly to an event of a different sort, which many of those present were to witness with their own eyes. *There are some of those standing here that shall not taste death till they see the Kingdom of God.* The last part of this saying is thus given by Matthew: "Till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom"; and by Mark: "Till they see the Kingdom of God coming in glory." To *taste death* reflects the bitterness that is a part of the passing away (cf. Jo. viii, 52; Hebr. ii, 9); and must be here understood of physical death. The general sense of the passage is: An important event will manifest the power of the Messiah and, in a certain way, will constitute the act of taking possession of the Kingdom. Jesus cannot be referring to the Second Coming at the end of time because He states that some of His hearers shall witness the event spoken of and the mode of speech is different from that which He uses when speaking of the Second Coming. It cannot refer to the Transfiguration, for to witness the Transfiguration was not to see the Kingdom but the glory of Christ. The saying refers to a mystical coming of Jesus into His Kingdom, an historical event which manifested His glory and the glory of the Kingdom. This was the destruction of Jerusalem and the spread of the Church. The first event was, in a certain sense, a vindication and glorification of Jesus, and in it might be seen a reflection of His glory and majesty. The spread of the Church, overcoming all obstacles and changing the lives of men, showed forth the glory of her Divine

(28) And it came to pass that, about eight days after these words, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. (29) And while he prayed, the shape of his countenance was altered and his garments became white and glittering. (30) And behold, there talked with him two men; and they were Moses and Elias, (31) who appeared in glory and spoke of his decease that he should

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Founder and manifested the power of the Kingdom of God. As the enemies of Christ were destroyed and as country after country was added to Christianity, He entered into His Kingdom and the Kingdom was seen in glory.

### *The Transfiguration.* IX, 28-36

Cf. Mt. xvii, 1-13 and Mk. ix, 1-13. These two accounts give the exact time, 6 days, between the preceding discourse and the Transfiguration. Lk. gives the approximate time, saying it was "about eight days after these words."

As witnesses of this manifestation of His glory, Jesus chose the three favored apostles, Peter, James and John. With them He went up into the mountain to pray. Suddenly, while He was praying, a marvellous change took place in His appearance. *The shape of His countenance was altered and His garments became white and glittering.* The form or shape of our Lord's body did not change; but the Divinity imparted, as it were, a splendor to His appearance. This shining forth, or manifestation, of the God-head which dwelt within Him is described as a great and brilliant light.

Beside the transfigured Savior, there appeared Moses and Elias, the Lawgiver and Prophet respectively. These two heroes of the Old Law appear in order to pay homage to Jesus, to show that He is the Lord of the Law and the Prophets, foretold and foreshadowed by them. They spoke with Jesus concerning His death, which He was about to



accomplish in Jerusalem. (32) Now Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep; but having become fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men that stood with him. (33) And it came to pass as they were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus: Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us build three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias; not knowing what he said. (34) And as he spoke these things, there came a cloud and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. (35) And a voice came out of the cloud, saying: This is My Son, My Beloved; hear him. (36) And after the

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undergo in Jerusalem. They spoke of His death as the scope and complement of the Law and Prophets and as the antitype of the entire Old Testament. And if Jesus, surrounded by glory, spoke of His sufferings and death, all aversion and offense should be removed from the minds of the apostles.

Peter and those with him had fallen asleep; but waking from sleep, they beheld the glory of Jesus and Moses and Elias. The latter were on the point of departing when Peter cried out in an endeavor to detain them, suggesting that they build three tabernacles and remain always upon the mountain. The apostles were held entranced by what they saw and heard, and desired to remain always on the holy mount. But as Peter spoke another manifestation took place. A cloud, attesting the presence of God, overshadowed Jesus and Moses and Elias. Possibly the cloud extended towards the apostles and they were afraid. The Heavenly Father, as at the baptism, bears witness to Jesus: *This is My Son, My Beloved, hear Him.* Besides the declaration of Divine Sonship of Jesus, as at the Baptism, the words also declare that Jesus is the supreme Lawgiver of the New Covenant and that all are to obey Him as supreme Master and infallible Teacher.

voice was uttered, Jesus was found alone. And they held their peace, and told no man in those days any of the things which they had seen.

(37) And it came to pass the day following, when they came down from the mountain, there met him a great multitude. (38) And behold, a man from the crowd cried out, saying: Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son, for he is my only one; (39) and behold, a spirit seizeth him and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him so that he foameth;

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When the Voice had spoken, Jesus was alone. Matthew records that, at the appearance of the cloud, the apostles fell down to the ground and covered their faces. When they raised themselves from the ground, they found that Jesus was alone. St. Luke simply states that they held their peace and told no one, at that time, what had occurred. Their silence was due to a command of Jesus (Mt. xvii, 9), the reason for which was the same as that given not to proclaim Him as the Messias.

### *Cure of the Demoniac Boy. IX, 37-43*

Cf. Mt. xvii, 14-18 and Mk. ix, 14-29. All three accounts connect the miracle immediately with the Transfiguration. On the mountain, the apostles beheld a vision of the glories of Heaven; at the foot of the mountain, they witness a scene from the realms of Satan.

St. Luke introduces the account by stating that it took place the day following the Transfiguration. From this statement it follows that the Transfiguration took place at night. As they came down from the mountain they were met by a great multitude. Mark, who is more complete, tells us that the nine apostles whom Jesus left at the foot of the mountain were disputing with the scribes. The cause of the dispute was their failure in an attempt to cast out an evil spirit.

At the approach of Jesus, the father of the boy appeals to

and it hardly departeth from him, bruising him. (40) And I desired thy disciples to cast him out and they could not. (41) And Jesus answering, said: O faithless and perverse generation! how long shall I be with you and suffer you? Bring hither thy son. (42) And as he was coming to him, the devil threw him down and tore him. (43) But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and cured the boy, and restored him to his father. And all were astonished at the mighty power of God.

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Him for help. Comparing the three accounts we learn that the boy was an only son (Lk.), that he had been possessed from infancy by an evil spirit that rendered him speechless (Mk.), that the evil spirit cast him into the water and into fire (Mt. and Mk.) and threw him down and tore him (Lk.). The father states that he had brought the boy to the apostles and that they were unable to free him from the evil spirit. This failure caused the scribes to ridicule them and their Master.

Jesus replies: *O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and suffer you?* The words of Jesus, expressing sorrow and grief because of unbelief, are addressed to all present. They are applied to each according to his measure of unbelief. The apostles failed to cast out the evil spirit because of lack of faith; the scribes mocked at them and their Master; the people looked on in doubt. The apostles are to be included in the complaint, for Jesus had given them power over all spirits; and besides He tells them that their failure was due to lack of faith (Mt. xvii, 18-19). In the case of the apostles it was lack of sufficient faith, faith commensurate with the gifts they had received.

Jesus commands the boy to be brought to him. Satan makes one more violent effort against the boy; but Jesus rebukes the evil spirit and frees the boy from his power.

(44) But while they wondered at all things he did, he said to his disciples: Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of Man shall be delivered up into the hands of men.

(45) But they understood not this word; and it was hidden from them so that they understood it not. And they were afraid to ask him concerning this word.

*Prediction of the Passion.* IX, 44-45

Cf. Mt. xvii, 22 and Mk. ix, 30-32.

All were astonished at the mighty power of Jesus as manifested in the cure of the demoniac boy. And Jesus makes it the occasion to again tell the apostles of His approaching sufferings and death. He admonishes them to weigh well what they have seen and heard, and to meditate upon His words and works. *For the Son of Man shall be delivered up into the hands of men.* He who had delivered man from the power of Satan shall be delivered up to the power of men. When this comes to pass, they are to remember His words and works. This remembrance will strengthen them in the time of trial and show them that He suffered because He willed it and not because He was overcome by men.

All three accounts state that they did not understand the words of Jesus. Probably they thought that the deliverance into the hands of man was some figure of speech. Yet, though they did not understand, they were afraid to ask after the meaning of the words. And Matthew adds that they were troubled exceedingly. The mysterious word gave them some foreboding of evil; but they were afraid to ask, as if unwilling to learn what impended.

*Lessons in Humility.* IX, 46-50

This instruction, given very briefly in our Gospel, is given at greater length in Mt. xviii, 1-14 and Mk. ix, 32-39. We shall call attention

(46) And there was a reasoning among them, which of them should be the greatest. (47) But Jesus seeing the thoughts of their heart, took a child and set him by his side, (48) and said to them: Whosoever shall receive this child

to these accounts in so far as is necessary for a clearer understanding of our text.

St. Luke states that the apostles began to reason among themselves as to which should be the greatest. The exact nature or cause of the dispute is not known; many conjectures are made, but they remain mere conjectures. The accounts indicate that they were actuated by pride and ambition. Mark states that when they entered Capharnaum Jesus asked them what their conversation had been. Unwilling to confess their dispute, they ask who should be the greater in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus knew their thoughts, knew the matter they had discussed and the motives. He gives them a lesson in humility. Mark, describing the scene at greater length, states that Jesus called the apostles and placed a little child in their midst; *He set him by His side*, i.e., with the apostles forming a circle around Him as their Master, Jesus places the little child at His side, in the place of honor. The action was symbolic. Jesus is the Master in the midst of His apostles; the child is given the place of honor instead of one of the disputants. "A child possesses a sincere mind, a clean heart, simplicity of thought, knows not how to seek honors and knows nothing of pre-eminence" (St. Cyril). Such have the place of honor, are the great ones, in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus applies the lesson by stating that he who receives a little child in His name, receives Him. The care and instruction of little children, especially in those days, was considered as a task too lowly for one of high aspirations. But

in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. For he that is the least among you all, the same is great. (49) And John answering, said: Master, we saw a certain man casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him because he followed not with us.

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in the Kingdom of God, the care of little children and of those who are lowly and simple as children is precious in the eyes of Jesus. Who gives His service to such, renders a service to Jesus and to the Heavenly Father. Therefore, Jesus teaches them not to seek what appears great in the eyes of the world; but rather let them assume the humblest of offices. Humility makes for greatness in the Kingdom of God.

The apostles seem to have understood the lesson; and St. John presents a case of conscience. As he states, the apostles had forbidden a certain man to cast out devils in the name of Jesus. The reason was: *He followed not with us*, i.e., he was not an apostle. The incident must have occurred on their recent missionary tour. The connection with the preceding seems clear: If they were not to be ambitious, had they done wrong in forbidding the man to cast out devils, a work for which Jesus had especially commissioned them. The identity of the man is unknown. He was not of the company of the apostles, neither does he seem to have been a declared disciple of Jesus. He believed sufficiently in the power of the Name of Jesus that, by its invocation, he cast out devils. Jesus replies: *Forbid him not; for he that is not against you, is for you*. The man's faith was right; he did not belong to the enemies of Christ; he had not formed a party or sect in opposition to Christ and the apostles. Hence, he was not against them. Rather, because he performed a good work in the name of Jesus, he was for them.

(50) And Jesus said to him: Forbid him not; for he that is not against you is for you.

(51) And it came to pass that, as the days of his assumption were being accomplished, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. (52) And he sent messengers before his face; and going, they went into a village of the Samaritans to prepare for him. (53) And they received him not, because his face was of one going to Jerusalem. (54) And

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*The Departure from Galilee. IX, 51-56*

When the time was drawing near for Jesus to depart out of this world, He set out from Galilee to Jerusalem. The *days of His assumption* means the Ascension into Heaven; only indirectly is His death indicated. *Set His face* is a Hebraism denoting purpose or intention (cf. Dan. xi, 17).

The direct route from Galilee to Jerusalem was by way of Samaria. This route was taken by Jesus and the apostles. As they approached a certain village of Samaria, Jesus sent messengers ahead to prepare for Him and the apostles. *They received Him not*, i.e., they refused hospitality, for the apostles had not been sent to preach to them. The reason for the refusal was that *His face was of one going to Jerusalem*, i.e., He was traveling in the direction of Jerusalem, to offer sacrifice and worship in the Temple, as they thought.

There was a long-standing and bitter feud between the Jews and the Samaritans. The latter were a mixture of Pagans and Jews. After the fall of the northern kingdom in the 8th century B.C., colonists from Babylon, Cutha, Avah, Emath and Sepharvaim were sent into Samaria. These colonists inter-married with the people who remained in the district and with apostate Jews. Their religion gradually took on a form resembling Judaism; and they claimed to have the true worship of God and built a temple on Mt. Garazim in opposition to the Temple at Jerusalem (cf. Jo. iv, 20). Several passages of the Gospels show the aversion of the Samaritans and Jews for each other

when his disciples James and John saw this, they said: Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them? (55) And turning, he rebuked them (saying: You know not of what spirit you are. The Son of Man is come not to destroy souls but to save). (56) And they went into another village.

(57) And as they walked in the way, a certain man said to him: I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

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(Jo. iv, 9; viii, 48; Lk. ix, 52; Mt. x, 5), and examples of the annoyances inflicted upon those journeying to Jerusalem at the time of the great Feasts are given by Fl Josephus (Ant. 20, 6; J. W. 2, 12; Vita 52). The refusal of the Samaritans to show hospitality towards Jesus and the apostles was due to this racial and national antagonism.

When James and John saw what was done, they desired to avenge the insult. They ask whether they should command that fire come down from Heaven and consume the Samaritans. Their wish certainly sprang from a lively faith and a devoted love; but there was mingled with it much imperfection. Jesus refuses to sanction their request. The portion of the 55th verse, containing a reply of Jesus, which we have placed in parenthesis, is not found in the best Greek MSS. nor in some of the MSS. of the Vulgate. It is found in some Greek texts, in the Clementine Vulgate, the Syriac, Gothic and Armenian Versions.

*They went into another village*, most probably a village not in Samaria. Because of the hostility of the Samaritans, Jesus changes the course of His journey. Turning back, He crosses over to Perea. This will explain why a large portion of what follows in Luke is parallel to the accounts of Matthew and Mark, who seem to state that these events occurred in Galilee. What follows took place as Jesus was leaving Galilee. It also explains why Matthew and Mark, recording the departure from Galilee in a single sentence, simply say that Jesus went from Galilee into Perea.



(58) And Jesus said to him: The foxes have holes and the birds of the air nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head. (59) And he said to another: Follow me. But he said: Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. (60) But he said to him: Let the dead bury their dead; but

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*Aspirants to the Discipleship.* IX, 57-62

In this narrative we have examples of three men who offered themselves or were called to the service of Christ. Parallel, in part, is Mt. viii, 19-22.

The first to offer himself was a certain man whom Matthew designates as a scribe. The man came spontaneously and offers to follow Jesus whithersoever He goes. There seems to have been something wrong with his intention; either he expected some gain, or he had not counted the cost. Jesus replies to the offer by calling attention to the privations and hardships He and His disciples must undergo. Jesus is not as well provided for as the beasts and birds. *The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head* was literally true at this time. Nazareth had rejected Him; Capharnaum was abandoned; the Samaritans had refused Him hospitality; Jerusalem was hostile. The reply means that the disciple of Christ must be ready to suffer privations, practice self-denial and make sacrifices, even as Jesus.

The second man received a call to follow Jesus. He is ready to answer the call, but desires a delay: *Suffer me first to go and bury my father*. Some have thought that the man requests that he be permitted to remain with his father until the latter's death. But such a request has little sense in the context; for evidently Jesus asked the man to follow Him immediately, and the request could not have meant a long delay. Jesus refuses the request in words that are figurative and paradoxical: *Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God*. The reply contains a play

go thou and preach the Kingdom of God. (61) And another said: I will follow thee, Lord; but first let me take leave of them that are at my house. (62) But Jesus said to him: No man putting his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God.

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on the word "dead," which is first taken figuratively and then literally. The meaning is: Let those who do not believe (the "dead" who are not called to a higher life) take care of burying the physically dead. Jesus does not here lay down a general rule; He solves a particular case. There was need of the man's immediate services. The disciple of Christ must prefer religious duties and obligations of his calling before even the highest and holiest affections. Moreover, the Law forbade certain individuals, the high priest and Nazarites, to take part in the burial of their nearest kin (Lev. xxi, 10-12; Num. vi, 6-7); so that the prohibition here made should not seem harsh to one who is to be consecrated to the service of Christ.

A third, who seems to have received a call, wishes to delay following until he has taken leave of his family and friends. Again Jesus refuses the request, saying: *No man putting his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God.* If a man begins to plow his field and allows his attention to wander to other things besides the work in hand, he can accomplish nothing. So also the disciple of Christ must give his whole and undivided attention to the service of Christ. If he be occupied with worldly affairs he is not fit to preach the Kingdom of God or to fulfil his duties. Having forsaken the world, he is not to return to it.

## Chapter X

- (1) After these things the Lord appointed also seventy others, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself was about to come.  
(2) And he said to them: The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the har-
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### *Mission of the Disciples. X, 1-17*

Jesus had already sent the Twelve to preach the Gospel. And now, as the end of His life approaches, He chooses others to aid in preaching the Gospel. He desired to visit many places in the densely populated district of Perea in the short time that remained; and since He could spend but a short time in each place, He sends the disciples to prepare the people for His coming. He sent them two and two into the places He was later to visit. Before sending them, He gives them instructions similar to those given the Apostles on their first mission. The similarity is accounted for by the similarity of their present duties.

Jesus first points out the reason for their sending: *The harvest is great, but the laborers are few.* Jesus compares the people with the grain, ripened and ready for the harvest. The "harvest" is the grain to be gathered in. As in the time of a great harvest, the farmer needs aid in bringing in the crops, so also has Christ need of laborers to gather men to faith in Him, according to the present economy of grace. Most commentators restrict the application to the time of our Lord; yet they may be given a wider application to all times. Jesus encourages the disciples by pointing out that

vest that he send laborers into his harvest. (3) Go; behold, I send you as lambs among wolves. (4) Carry neither purse, nor wallet, nor shoes; and salute no man on the way. (5) Into whatsoever house you enter, first say: Peace be on this house. (6) And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to you.

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many are ready to believe and will be brought to faith through their labors. But they must remember that the worthy and true disciple is sent by God and that the success of his labors depends on the grace of God. Hence, they are admonished to pray that the Lord send laborers into the vineyard. Success is intimated in these words; so also is opposition in the following words: *I send you as lambs among wolves*. Persecution and opposition are predicted, for the lambs become the prey of wolves. Yet they are not to fear, for Jesus has sent them.

The instruction that they carry neither purse, nor wallet, nor shoes, is similar to that given the apostles (cf. ix, 3). Here is added the admonition: *Salute no man on the way*. Salutation is good, but the timely execution of Divine commands is better (St. Ambrose). They are to spend no time in useless conversations or in the elaborate and endless forms of Oriental salutation, but are to hasten to fulfil their mission (cf. IV Kgs. iv, 29).

Verses 5-9 contain instructions on their mode of action towards those who receive them. On entering a house they are to invoke the blessings of peace: *Peace be on this house*, i.e., upon those who dwell therein. *The son of peace*, is one inclined to peace. If such dwell in the house, their blessing shall rest upon him and he shall be made partaker in the peace which the disciples announce. If not, *it shall return to you*, i.e., it shall be without effect for the members of that household, but not a loss to the disciples.

When they are received into a house they are to remain,

(7) And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they provide; for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Remove not from house to house. (8) And into whatsoever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you, (9) and heal the sick that are therein, and say to them: The Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. (10) But in whatsoever city you enter and they receive you not, going out into the streets thereof, say: (11) Even the dust of your city that cleaveth to our feet, we wipe off against you; yet know this, the Kingdom of God is come nigh. (12) I say to you: It shall be more tolerable in that day for

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eating and drinking such things as they provide. They are not to be eclectic in the matter of food; neither are they to fear to receive support, *for the laborer is worthy of his hire*. (Cf. I Cor. ix, 14.) The additional command is given, as also in the case of the apostles, not to remove from house to house, lest they offend those who first offered hospitality and lest they seem to be seeking themselves rather than the salvation of souls. Their work is to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

Not all cities will receive the disciples, verses 10-12. In such cases they are instructed to shake the dust of the city from their feet (cf. ix, 4-5). Yet in spite of the opposition, *the Kingdom of God is come nigh*. The Kingdom will certainly be established; but for those who refuse to receive the disciples it shall be a condemnation. At the day of judgment, which is spoken of here as *that day*, i.e., the great day, *it shall be more tolerable for Sodom than for that city*. In the Old Testament the people of Sodom are spoken of as the worst of sinners, having given themselves up to sexual crimes against nature (cf. Gen. xiii, 13); and Isaias and Jeremias, wishing to describe the wickedness of their contemporaries, declare them to be as evil in the sight of God as the people of Sodom. Because of the sins they were de-

Sodom than for that city. (13) Woe to thee Corozain! Woe to thee Bethsaida! For if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the mighty works that have been wrought in you, they would have done penance long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. (14) But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and

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stroyed by fire and brimstone. But the judgment shall be less severe for Sodom than for the city that rejects the envoys of Christ.

The mention of the rejection of the disciples brings to mind the cities that had rejected Christ. In leaving Galilee Jesus mentions the manner in which three cities responded to His teaching and miracles and pronounces judgment upon them (v. 13-15).

Corozain is not mentioned elsewhere in Sacred Scripture. It is usually identified with Kerza (Keraziye), the ruins of which are located in a valley about two miles northwest of Capharnaum. Bethsaida is mentioned several times in the New Testament as the home of Peter, Andrew and Philip; and is considered to have been either Khan Minye or Ain el Tabigha, south of Capharnaum on the Plain of Genesar. Jesus declares that if in Tyre and Sidon had been wrought the mighty works that were wrought in these two cities, they would have done penance long ago in sackcloth and ashes. Since Jesus speaks of mighty works done in these two cities, it is evident that the Gospels do not record all the works of Jesus. Tyre and Sidon were two Gentile cities on the Mediterranean Sea. The judgment of God upon these cities is recorded in Ez., xxvi and xxvii. Jesus may be referring to the cities of His own time. Had He favored them as He favored Corozain and Bethsaida, they would have been converted and done penance; and they would have done it *long ago*; and not ordinary penance, but penance *in sackcloth and ashes*. Because Tyre and Sidon had been less favored, their punishment will be less rigorous in comparison

Sidon at the judgment than for you. (15) And thou Capharnaum! Shalt thou be exalted unto Heaven? Thou shalt be thrust down to Hades. (16) He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me, rejecteth him that sent me.

(17) And the seventy returned with joy, saying: Lord, even the devils are subject to us in thy name. (18) And

with Corozain and Bethsaida, which had abused greater graces.

Capharnaum is mentioned separately and with good reason. It was the most privileged city of Galilee, had been the Lord's ordinary place of residence and guilty of a greater abuse of grace. The city was *exalted unto Heaven*, by the many miracles and frequent teaching of Jesus, who made it "His own city"; and in the worldly sense, it was the richest and most important city of Galilee. The city shall be *thrust down to Hades*, in the same sense that judgment is passed on the other two cities; it shall fall into ignominy and oblivion.

Turning again to the disciples, Jesus connects their work with His own (v. 16). Those who hear and believe the teaching of the disciple of Christ, hear and believe Christ; but he who rejects the disciple, rejects Christ. This verse shows that there is in the Church a divinely instituted teaching office and authority that must be heard with the same readiness and obedience that Jesus demands for Himself. It may also be noted that faith in God, Christ and the Church are here united inseparably. (Cf. Jo. xv, 18-23.)

#### *Return of the Disciples. X, 17-24*

The Gospel does not describe the work of the disciples but merely states that they returned with joy at the success of their mission. The meeting place is not mentioned. It

he said to them: I saw Satan like lightning fall from heaven. (19) Behold, I have given you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall hurt you. (20) But yet, rejoice not that spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

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certainly was not the place from which Jesus had sent them forth; very likely the place had been designated beforehand.

The disciples report that even the devils were subject to them in the name of Jesus. Jesus replies: *I saw Satan like lightning fall from Heaven*. The imperfect tense refers to a past concomitant act; and this act, according to the context, seems to be the mission of the disciples. Jesus would thus seem to tell them that they reported nothing of which He was not aware; in reality, He interprets their mission and their success. It was not the mere physical driving of Satan from the bodies of men that constituted the aim and end of their mission, but the destruction of the empire of Satan. Through the mission of the disciples, the representatives of Christ, the power of Satan was being broken and his kingdom restricted. He *fell* from power even as the lightning falls from Heaven.

Jesus calls their attention to the fact that the power they had exercised came from Him. *Power to tread on serpents and scorpions* is figurative of all attacks and opposition of Satan who is represented as a dangerous reptile (cf. Ps. xc, 13; Apc. xii, 9). While Jesus had given them this power, they should be on their guard against too high an estimation of it. The power of working miracles is no guarantee of salvation; yet, as a gift of God one may rejoice in its possession. *But rejoice rather in this that your names are written in Heaven*, gives a higher motive for joy than the power of working miracles.



(21) In that same hour, he rejoiced in the Holy Ghost, and said: I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones. Yea, Father, for so it hath seemed good in thy sight. (22) All things are delivered to me by my Father; and no one knoweth who the

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At the return of the disciples and the evidence of their faith, Jesus rejoices; and He gives expression to this joy in a prayer and a statement of the greatest moment (v. 21-22). Parallel is found in Mt. xi, 25-27.

Jesus gives praise and thanks to the Heavenly Father in connection with two remarkable instances of His providential conduct regarding the Kingdom of God. He conceals these things from *the wise and the prudent*, i.e., from those who are wise in their own conceits and prudent with the prudence of the world. On the other hand, He reveals them to *little ones*, i.e., to the humble, who are little in their own opinion and in the opinion of the world. God is absolutely independent of the human intellect; and in the economy of salvation He is not dependant upon human wisdom and human strength (cf. Is. xxix, 14; I Cor. i, 27; iii, 18). God so deals with men that the proud do not come to the truth; He does not accommodate Himself to their desires.

**DIVINITY OF JESUS.** The declaration of Jesus, following upon this prayer, affirms with invincible force and clearness the divinity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Each phrase of verse 22 should receive careful consideration. *All things are delivered to me by my Father.* This statement is absolute and without limitation, and contains all that is said on this point in the fourth Gospel: (a) All men are given Him by the Father (Jo. xvi, 15); (b) Truths known only to the Father (Jo. xvi, 15); (c) All things done by the Son (Jo. v, 17). One of the things received from

Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and to whom the Son wills to reveal him.

(23) And turning to his disciples, he said: Blessed are the eyes that see the things which you see. (24) For I say

the Father is mentioned here; and it could be received only by one who is divine and equal to the Father. This is Divine Knowledge. *No one knoweth who the Son is, but the Father.* This phrase expresses perfect and complete knowledge; and no one has such knowledge of the Son, but the Father. Hence, Jesus the Son of God is of so great perfection and so far superior to all created things that only the Father knows Him perfectly. And since the perfection of the Son transcends the comprehension of all created and finite intellects and can be adequately known by an infinite intellect alone, it follows that the perfection of the Son must be infinite. *And who the Father is, but the Son.* The words are concerned with knowledge as the preceding. The Father is infinite in perfection and can be known perfectly and adequately only by an infinite intellect. But the Son possesses this knowledge, so that He possesses infinite knowledge. The Father and the Son, Jesus Christ, are equal in perfection and in knowledge. (Cf. Jo. vi, 46; vii, 29; x, 15.) Jesus further declares His power of imparting this knowledge to others: *To whom the Son wills to reveal.* Jesus reveals the Father to whomsoever He wills; and without this revelation there is no true knowledge of the Father. (It hardly need be mentioned that the Son does not impart knowledge equal to His own; for the finite cannot grasp the infinite.) In the prayer, Jesus declared that the Father reveals the truth to men; and here He claims the same power for Himself (cf. Jo. i, 18; vi, 66; xiv, 6). To sum up: Jesus, the Son of God, possesses the same perfection of cognition and cognoscibility as the Father, and the same power of revealing truth to men

to you: Many prophets and kings have desired to see the things that you see, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that you hear, and have not heard them.

(25) And behold, a certain lawyer stood up, tempting

as the Father. He is equal to the Father, Divine. This one verse refutes the contention of the Rationalist, Modernists and Liberals who claim that the first Gospels contain nothing regarding the Divinity of Christ. It also refutes the contention of those who state that the "Christ of the Synoptics" is not the "Christ of the Fourth Gospel"; for the parallels in thought between this verse and St. John's Gospel, noted above, show that "there is nothing in the Johannine Christology that is not contained in this verse."

**BLESSEDNESS OF FAITH (22-24).** Jesus now declares the disciples blessed for having come to the knowledge hidden from the proud. *Blessed are the eyes that see the things that you see.* The disciples saw our Lord not only with the eyes of the body as did many others of their day, but they also saw Him through the eyes of faith. They are blessed because they have seen and believed in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and through Him have received knowledge of the Father. Their blessedness is emphasized by contrast with the Patriarchs and Kings of the Old Testament, who desired to see and hear the things they saw and heard. The desire to see the days of the Messiah runs through the entire Old Testament. The Patriarchs and Prophets saw only in vision, by faith and hope; the disciples saw the realization of all these hopes, living in the time of fulfillment.

*Law of Charity. Good Samaritan. X, 25-37*

A certain *lawyer*, one versed in the Law of Moses, called Scribe in the other Gospels, asks Jesus a question. It

him, saying: Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life? (26) But he said to him: What is written in the law? how readeest thou? (27) He answering, said: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. (28) And he said to him: Thou hast answered right; do this, and thou shalt live. (29) But desiring to justify himself, he said to Jesus: And who is my

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seems that this took place in a synagogue, for the lawyer *stood up*, having been one of those seated about Jesus as He taught. The action itself has nothing uncommon about it, for it was customary for the auditors to propose questions to the speaker; and there is no direct evidence that the man was dishonest in placing the question. The term, *tempting*, may merely mean that he wished to see what kind of an answer Jesus would give. The question is as to the requirement for salvation.

Jesus refers the lawyer to the Law; *What is written?* and *How readeest thou?* being equivalent to the Rabbinical formulas for quoting the Law. The lawyer answers without hesitation, quoting Dt. vi, 5 on the love of God above all things, and Lev. xix, 17 on the love of neighbor. Jesus Himself later declared that these were the two great commandments, on which the whole Law depends; and He showed the intimate connection that exists between the two commandments (cf. Mt. xxii, 36-40). Jesus here approves the answer of the lawyer; but adds the admonition: *Do this and thou shalt live*. It is not sufficient to know the Law; one must put it into practice.

The lawyer was not satisfied. He still has a difficulty concerning the application of the Law. He was *willing to justify himself*, i.e., to show that there was a reason for placing a question which he himself had answered. *Who is my neighbor?* is his next question. In the context, the ques-

neighbor? (30) And Jesus answering, said: A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, who having both stripped and wounded him, went away, leaving him half dead. (31) And it chanced that a certain priest went down that same way; and seeing him, passed by. (32) In like manner also a levite, when he was near the place and saw him, passed by. (33) But a certain

tion means: Whom must I love as myself? Jesus does not give a theoretical reply. Instead, He gives a practical illustration of the love of neighbor by one of the most popular and appealing of the parables.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN (30-37). In this parable an act of mercy is presented as being exercised towards a stranger and an alien. Restrictions to charity being removed, love becomes universal. The purpose of the parable is evident from the question which precedes and from the admonition which follows.

A certain man, most probably a Jew, went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He passed through one of the most desolate regions of Palestine, infested with robbers who lay in wait for travellers along the highroad of trade between the two cities. This traveller fell among robbers. Besides robbing him, they also stripped him of his clothing, beat him and left him lying by the roadside. No reason is given for the added deed of violence, which left the man entirely helpless.

Aid seems to be in sight for the helpless man. For along the same road there travel a priest and a levite. But the priest, having come near the place where the wounded man lay, passed by without offering any assistance. In like manner, also the levite, seeing the man, went his way. Jesus makes no comment on the action of the priest and the levite from whom, above all others, one would expect an act of mercy. He allows their action to speak for itself,

Samaritan being on his journey, came near him; and seeing him, was moved with compassion. (34) And going up to him, bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; and setting him upon his own beast, brought him to an inn and took care of him. (35) And the next day he took out two denarii and gave to the host, and said: Take care of him; and whatsoever thou shalt spend over and above, I, at my return, will repay thee. (36) Which of these three, in thy

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as He likewise does in regard to the third who travelled that way.

In striking contrast with these two, Jesus introduces a Samaritan. He sees the wounded man and does not remain unmoved by his plight, as did the priest and levite. He is moved to compassion and shows his sentiments in a practical way. He approaches the wounded man, binds up his wounds, *pouring in oil and wine*, the common remedy for cuts and bruises in those days. The wine was used for its cleansing and astringent properties, the oil for its soothing and healing qualities. Having rendered first-aid, the Samaritan places the wounded man on his own beast and brings him to an inn. Here he provides for his immediate needs; and as he was departing on the following day, he gave the host *two denarii*, sufficient to support the wounded man several days, with the promise that he would reimburse the host should this amount not be sufficient.

The parable being ended Jesus asks the lawyer: *Which of these three, in thy opinion, proved neighbor of him that fell among the robbers?* It will be noted that Jesus inverts the original question proposed by the lawyer. The reason for this is that the relationship of neighbor is mutual. The change focuses attention upon the Samaritan; and the question, thus inverted, requires a reply that permits an immediate application of the lesson. The lawyer, avoiding explicit mention of the Samaritan, replies: *He that showed*

opinion, proved neighbor to him that fell among the robbers? (37) But he said: He that showed mercy. And Jesus said: Go, and do thou in like manner.

(38) Now it came to pass as they went, that he entered into a certain town; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. (39) And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at the feet of Jesus and heard his word. (40) But Martha was distraught with much serving.

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*mercy.* And Jesus confirms the reply with the admonition: *Go, and do thou in like manner.* The lesson is therefore: Show mercy, which is active charity, to anyone in need without regard to nation, custom or relationship. As the Samaritan recognized a neighbor in the unfortunate Jew and proved himself a neighbor by his deed of mercy, so also do you consider anyone in need as your neighbor and prove yourself such by your works.

### *Mary and Martha.* X, 38-42

As Jesus and the apostles went on their way, they entered into a certain town. This town was Bethany, about 15 furlongs from Jerusalem, the home of Mary and Martha (Jo. xi, 1). A certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. She was most probably the elder of the two sisters, since the house is said to be hers and she is said to receive Jesus. Her sister's name was Mary. These sisters are introduced into the account as persons of whom the Gospel has not yet spoken. Mary is identified as the sister of Martha, residing at Bethany; and Lazarus is identified by St. John as the brother of Mary and Martha (Jo. xi, 1-2). All circumstances lead one to believe that this was not the first visit paid by Jesus to this home in Bethany. The present narrative, the miracle recorded in Jo. xii, and the anointing of Jesus by Mary, imply a close friendship.

And she came up and said: Lord, hast thou no care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? speak to her therefore that she help me. (41) But the Lord answering, said to her: Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things. (42) But one thing is necessary. For Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken from her.

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Mary sat at the feet of Jesus, as a disciple, and heard His word. In contrast, Martha was busy with much service, hastening hither and thither to insure a worthy reception of her guests. She desired her sister to aid her in the work; and she addresses her complaint to Jesus, asking Him to dismiss Mary that she might aid in serving.

Jesus does not reprehend Martha because of her occupation, which was laudable, but because of her over-anxiety and feverish solicitude: *Thou art anxious and troubled about many things*. To offer hospitality to Jesus and the apostles was certainly a good work, but in doing this one must not be troubled and filled with anxiety. For, *one thing is necessary*. And this one thing is explained by the words: *For Mary hath chosen the good part which shall not be taken from her*. Mary had chosen to be near Jesus, to hear His words, to be instructed unto salvation. "Thou hast chosen what is good, she what is better. Thou hast chosen that which passes away, for thou ministerest to the hungry and thirsty; but a time will come when men neither hunger nor thirst, and thy office shall be taken from thee" (St. Augustine).



## Chapter XI

- (1) And it came to pass, as he was in a certain place praying, that when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him: Lord, teach us to pray even as John taught his disciples.  
(2) And he said to them: When you pray, say: Father,
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### *Instruction on Prayer. XI, 1-13*

The present instruction consists in a form of prayer, a parable and an exhortation to perseverance and confidence in prayer. The entire instruction, with the exception of the parable, is found also in Mt. vi, 5-15 and vii, 7-11, where it forms part of the Sermon on the Mount. Because of the importance of the subject, Jesus spoke of prayer on more than one occasion.

The present instruction was occasioned by the request of one of the disciples that Jesus teach them to pray as St. John had taught his disciples. The mention of the Baptist was probably occasioned by the fact that they were in the country beyond the Jordan where he had begun his mission. It was a laudable custom for the Rabbis to teach their disciples how to pray; and St. John had followed this custom. The request is now made of Jesus.

**THE LORD'S PRAYER** (2-4). The prayer, as given here, contains five petitions; as given in Matthew, it contains seven petitions. The time and place differ. The prayer was given twice; very likely in a shorter form on the second occasion, here recorded.

*Father.* The disciples of Christ are instructed to address God as their Father. The title shows the relationship that exists between the creature and his Creator. It is intended

hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. (3) Give us this day our daily bread. (4) And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation.

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to give confidence in the goodness of God, the Heavenly Father.

*Hallowed be thy name*, i.e., may thy name be glorified. The highest good that man can desire and the purpose which God had in all His works is the object of this petition. To honor and glorify the Name of God is to venerate and honor God Himself. The petition regards the external glory given to God by his creatures.

*Thy Kingdom come*. "Kingdom" is here general and is to be applied to the Kingdom of God in all its phases; and "come" also admits of various related meanings. We pray in this petition that the Kingdom of God, founded by Jesus Christ, may increase and include all men; and that the Kingdom increase intensively and not only extensively. In a word, that the membership of the Kingdom be increased and that the members become better and holier subjects of the Kingdom. The petition also includes the perfection and consummation of the Kingdom in the glory and triumph of Heaven.

*Give us this day our daily bread*. In Sacred Scripture, "bread" is used to designate all that is necessary for the sustenance of the body. We ask not for luxuries, but for the necessities of life. And we pray for them only for "this day." Each day the Christian is to acknowledge his dependence on God by asking Him to supply what is necessary for life; he is to pray from day to day, leaving the future to Divine Providence.

*Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us*. The second clause of the petition expresses a cause that moves God to show mercy and states a condi-

(5) And he said to them: Who of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and shall say to him: Friend, lend me three loaves, (6) because a friend of mine is come to me from his journey and I have nothing to set before

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tion which He requires in those who seek forgiveness of sin. We make a contract with God, as it were, according to which He is to forgive us as we forgive our neighbor (St. Augustine). It is evident that the norm or measure here expressed consists solely in the act of remission; for all else, guilt, debt, penalty, are different and exceed all measure and comparison. God forgives more and greater debts than man forgives his fellow men, and He does so with greater liberality and to less worthy debtors. He who forgives from true Christian motives exercises virtue and thereby disposes himself for forgiveness; but he who does not forgive renders himself unworthy of forgiveness, for he clings to that which is contrary to the Love of God and neighbor.

*Lead us not into temptation.* Everything that exposes or entices man to sin is a temptation. The petition reminds man of his infirmity and weakness and admonishes him to place his trust in God, from whom alone comes victory against the assaults of the enemy. "Lead one" is a mode of speech often found in the Scriptures to designate what God permits. Thus have the Fathers understood the petition; v.g., "Suffer us not to be lead" (St. Cyprian), "Permit us not to be overcome" (St. Augustine).

THE FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT (5-10). The parable shows forth the power of prayer and teaches perseverance. Jesus uses the figure of a man coming to his friend at the untimely hour of midnight. The reason for the visit is that the petitioner has just received a friend who has come to him from a journey and has no food to set before him. He comes to his friend asking that he supply him with food to

him; (7) and he from within should answer, and say: Trouble me not; the door is now shut and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. (8) I say to you: Although he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet, because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. (9) And I say to you: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. (10) For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. (11) And which

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entertain this friend. The man within the house refuses the request; for he does not wish to be troubled at that hour of the night, nor does he wish that his sleeping household be disturbed. *I cannot rise*, means "I do not wish to rise." But if the man continue knocking at the door and repeating his request, the friend will finally arise and grant the petition. He does not do this because the petitioner is his friend, but because of his continuous beseeching. He obtains the request through perseverance.

The lesson is clearly pointed out both in the parable itself and in the admonition: *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.* As the friend at midnight knocked, sought and asked, and continued to do so until his request was granted, so also should man continue to seek and ask of God until his petition is granted. The parable thus contains an invitation and an exhortation to perseverance in prayer and confidence that persevering prayer will be answered. Asking, seeking, knocking indicate the fervor and attention that should accompany prayer (St. Chrysostom).

CONFIDENCE IN PRAYER (11-13). Confidence in prayer is taught by a series of examples. Jesus represents a son asking his father for food. If the son ask for bread, the father will not give him a stone; if he ask for fish, the

of you, if he ask his father for bread, will he give him a stone? Or a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? (12) Or if he shall ask for an egg, will he give him a scorpion? (13) If then you, being already evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from Heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask him?

(14) And he was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb; and when he had cast out the devil the dumb man spoke, and the multitudes were in admiration. (15) But

father will not give him a serpent; and if he ask for an egg, the father will not give him a scorpion. In all cases the request is for that which is useful and needful; and the father does not answer the request by giving that which is useless and harmful. Applied to the supernatural: God does not answer prayers by giving what is useless or harmful for the petitioner.

Jesus draws the conclusion from the examples that if man, who is evil, knows how to give good gifts to his children, how much more will God give good gifts to them that ask Him. Men are declared already evil, *being evil*. Since man is not evil by nature, he is evil because of his inclination to sin arising from original sin. If man gives good gifts, there is all the more reason to expect an answer from the Heavenly Father who is all love and mercy.

### *The Blasphemy of the Pharisees. XI, 14-28*

The circumstances under which the blasphemy was uttered was the cure of a demoniac. Cf. Mt. xii, 22-37 and Mk. iii, 20-30. The devil cast out was *dumb*, i.e., he rendered the man possessed speechless. Matthew adds that the man was likewise blind. The miracle filled the people with admiration of the power of Jesus; and, according to Mat-

some of them said: He casteth out devils by Beelzebul, the prince of devils. (16) And others tempting, asked of him a sign from heaven.

(17) But seeing their thoughts, he said to them: Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall. (18) But if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?

thew, they began to inquire among themselves if Jesus might not be the Messias.

Some of those who beheld the miracle and saw its effect upon the people claim that Jesus is in league with the evil spirit: *He casts out devils by Beelzebul, the prince of devils.* The name here given to Satan is variously written. As found in many texts, "Beelzebub," seems to be derived from *Baal* and *zebub*, the name given the God of Accaron (IV Kgs. i, 2 f.), which means "the lord of flies." The form found in most Greek texts, "Beelzebul," is probably derived from *baal* and *zebel*, meaning "the lord of filth." Satan is referred to under terms of reproach and contempt. And with such a one, they claim, Jesus is making common cause. Others of the Pharisees asked Him for a *sign from Heaven*, as though the present and other miracles were not from Heaven but the work of hell.

REPLY OF JESUS (17-20). Jesus first replies to the blasphemy of the Pharisees. He calls attention to the natural truth that *every kingdom divided against itself shall fall*. This proverbial saying is found in Jewish and classic literature; v.g., Sallust: *Concordia res parvae crescunt, discordia maximae dilabuntur*. Unity is the first requisite for the existence of any community as all must admit. If such be the case, there must be some sort of unity in the kingdom of Satan, a unity which will cause the evil spirits to conspire to one end and not to oppose one another. But, as Jesus continues, *if Satan be divided against himself, how shall his*

because you say that by Beelzebul I cast out devils. (19) Now if I cast out devils by Beelzebul, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges. (20) But if I, by the finger of God, cast out devils,

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*kingdom stand?* It is Satan's desire to possess man, to harass him and lead him into sin; this is his kingdom. Now, if Satan casts out devils and advances the spiritual welfare of man, it is manifest that he is divided and destroys himself, which is impossible. The conclusion must be that Jesus does not cast out devils by Satan. To appreciate the force of this argument we must remember that the accusation of the Pharisees did not regard only this one miracle; it included the entire work of Christ. And Christ takes this one work in relation to His entire work which had as its purpose the destruction of the kingdom of Satan and the founding of the Kingdom of God. Satan is the enemy of God, of man and of all that is good; he cannot co-operate with God, advance good and destroy his own kingdom. Natural reason should have shown the Pharisees that their words were false.

Jesus also shows that they were filled with prejudice and malice. There existed exorcists among the Jews, and the Pharisees readily admitted that *their children*, i.e., even members of their own party, cast out devils at times. Naturally, they recognized and claimed that this power was from God. Hence, the question of Jesus, *by whom do your children cast them out?* is answered, or would have been answered under other circumstances: By the power of God. The argument is: If your children cast out devils and you believe and claim that they have this power from God, why do you deny that my power is from God? *They shall be your judges*, for the fact that exorcists exist among you, the fact that you believe their power to be from God, the fact that you do not ascribe their power to Satan, all this condemns

then the Kingdom of God is come upon you. (21) When a strong man armed guardeth his court, those things which are his are in peace. (22) But if a stronger than he come upon him and overcome him, he will take away all his armor wherein he trusted and will divide the spoils. (23) He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not

you as guilty of prejudice, malice and calumny when you ascribe my works to Satan.

From the two arguments it follows that Jesus cast out devils by the power of God. Therefore, He concludes: *The Kingdom of God is come upon you*. By the fact that Jesus possessed this power from God and by the fact that He was destroying the kingdom of Satan, the Kingdom of God was being established. This conclusion shows that Jesus had in view the one miracle in its relation to His entire work.

PARABLE OF THE STRONG MAN (21-23). This parable is a continuation of the defense of Jesus and an illustration of the opposition that exists between Him and Satan. The image used for illustration is easily understood. A strong man has fortified his castle and lives in peace and quiet possession until a stronger comes against him. By reason of the context, the *strong man* is Satan, who has made man his slave and spread his kingdom throughout the world. The *stronger* is Jesus the Messiah, among whose titles is that of "God the Mighty" (Is. ix, 6). Jesus had put Satan to flight, had announced the Kingdom of God and proven Himself the Messiah by many miracles. Jesus takes away *all his armor*, the cunning and deceit by which Satan had overcome man, in so far as He has unmasked Satan and made known his deceits (St. Bede). The *spoils* that are divided are the souls that Jesus rescues from Satan.

From this opposition, Jesus draws the conclusion: *He that is not with me, is against me*. There is a great conflict between Jesus and Satan. Man must decide with whom he



with me, scattereth. (24) When the unclean spirit is come out of a man, he walketh through waterless places, seeking rest; and because he findeth not, he saith: I will return to my house whence I came out. (25) And when he is come, he findeth it swept and garnished. (26) Then he goeth and taketh with him seven devils more wicked than himself; and entering in, they dwell there. And the last state of that man becomes worse than the first.

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will stand; neutrality is impossible. Man must be either with or against Christ. Many refer the second clause, *he that gathereth not with me scattereth*, to the Pharisees in a special manner. They were the teachers of the people, and as such had the duty of gathering them to Christ. Instead, they drove the people, scattered them, away from Christ and the Kingdom of God.

RETURN OF THE UNCLEAN SPIRIT (24-26). Jesus now passes on to an instruction and admonition against falling back into the power of Satan. The miracle and the discussion which followed furnished the image for the parable.

*Unclean spirit*, as previously noted, does not designate a specific quality or characteristic of Satan because of some sin. He is called "unclean" in opposition to the "clean" spirits, the angels. Jesus speaks of Satan in human terms. When he goes out of a man, he walks in *waterless places*, i.e., the deserts, where a habitation cannot be found. Finding no rest, he resolves to return to the house he had possessed. He finds the house *swept and garnished*, i.e., clean, but empty, as Matthew adds. A few have understood that Satan finds the soul adorned with virtue and supernatural gifts; but in that case it is difficult to understand why the house is said to be empty and why Satan finds no opposition at his return. Going, he brings other evil spirits, worse than himself, and entering in makes his

(27) As he spoke these things, a certain woman from the crowd lifting up her voice, said to him: Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the breasts that nourished thee. (28) But he said: Yea verily, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.

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abode there. Naturally the last state of that man is worse than the first. The *seven devils* symbolize all wickedness.

For the application of the parable, we must refer to Mt. xii, 45; "So shall it be with this wicked generation." These words, together with the preceding discourse, give the clue to the proper application. The parable applies, in the first place, to the people of the time. Satan had dwelt among them under the form of idolatry, and later in the form of pride and unbelief. John the Baptist and Jesus labored among them and drove out Satan. But, instead of doing penance and following the admonition of Jesus, they halted halfway. The house was swept, but it was unoccupied. Satan would re-enter and the last state of the people would be worse than the first. (The parable may be applied, by way of analogy and in a secondary sense, to the individual soul. But in this case not all the particulars can be applied.)

A TESTIMONY (27-28). While the Pharisees blasphemed and calumniated Jesus, a woman from the crowd raised her voice in praise of Him and His Blessed Mother. She declares blessed and worthy of praise the mother who bore and nourished Jesus. Already is being fulfilled the prophecy of Mary (Lk. i, 48). Praising the mother because of her son redounds to the honor of the son; for if a mother be blessed because of the son, he is far more blessed and worthy of praise.

Jesus confirms and perfects the praise of His Mother. The praise of the woman did not arise above the natural; Jesus raises it to the supernatural. *Yea verily* (μενοῦν) confirms and ratifies what has been said and modifies it in

(29) And as the multitudes were running together, he began to say: This generation is a wicked generation; it asketh for a sign, and no sign shall be given it but the sign of Jonas the prophet. (30) For as Jonas became a sign to the Ninivites, so also shall the Son of Man be to this genera-

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the sense of making it better and stronger. *Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it*, does not deny that the Mother of Jesus is blessed and worthy of praise; but declares that it is more profitable to be united to God by faith and obedience than by mere external relations. Both sources of blessedness are in the Mother of Jesus, whose faith and obedience are shown forth in the first chapters of the Gospel.

*Reply to Those who Sought a Sign. XI, 29-36*

As we saw above, certain ones asked Jesus for a *sign from Heaven*. Just what kind of sign they desired is not clear; but it is evident that they wished to declare the works of Jesus insufficient, and the request intimates that the works of Jesus might not be of Heaven. Jesus replies by stating what sign shall be given them, by calling attention to two noteworthy examples of faith in the Old Testament, and by a parable.

THE SIGN OF JONAS (29-30). Jesus declares that a sign such as they demanded will not be given them; for they are a wicked generation and unwilling to believe. Since they declared that the works of Jesus were not signs, He can speak in this manner even though He did work miracles after the present discourse. He denies that He will work a miracle merely at their bidding and to satisfy their curiosity. He promises them the *sign of Jonas*. In Mt. xii, 39-40, the "sign" is given as a miracle. As Jonas was in the belly of the fish three days, so shall the Messiah be in the bowels

tion. (31) The queen of the south shall rise in judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon here. (32) The men of Ninive shall rise in judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them; because they did penance according to the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a

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of the earth three days. As the sign of Jonas was a type of Christ's death and resurrection, so also was it a testimony to the sin of those who rejected Him. Hence, both Matthew and Mark give the words of Jesus referring to the effect of the preaching of Jonas after being delivered from the fish.

THE QUEEN OF THE SOUTH (31). The *queen of the south* was the Queen of Sheba (or Saba), a country lying in the southern part of the Arabian peninsula, called *Arabia felix* by the ancients, and now known as Yeman. The visit of this queen, who came *from the ends of the earth*, as the ancients understood it, is described in III Kgs. x and II Par. ix. She shall *rise in judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them*, by comparison and contrast. She was a barbarian queen, who came a great distance, attracted by the wisdom of Solomon. This generation, favored by God, has a greater than Solomon in their very midst, one who spoke wisdom and confirmed His teaching with many miracles. Yet they had not the faith of the queen of the south.

THE MEN OF NINEVE (32). Nineve, the ancient capital of Assyria, lay on the eastern bank of the Tigris. The people of the city did penance at the preaching of Jonas; and they shall also rise in judgment and condemn the men of this generation. The contrast and comparison is between the heathen Ninevites and the Chosen People; between Jonas who was a stranger and Jesus who came into "His own"; between Jonas who came unannounced and Jesus

greater than Jonas here. (33) No man, having lit a lamp, putteth it in a hidden place or under a bushel; but upon a stand that they who come in may see the light. (34) The lamp of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be sound, thy whole body will be full of light; but if it be evil, thy body

whose coming had been announced. Again the heathen corresponded with less grace than the people to whom Jesus spoke.

PARABLE OF THE LIGHT (33-36). At first sight there seems to be a break in the discourse. Yet, the parable of the light is closely connected with the preceding and forms a part of the answer to the request for a sign. Jesus has shown them that they have received sufficient proofs of His mission, by contrasting them with others who received less proof of the truth. Now He points out the reason for their unbelief, their unwillingness to make use of the light by which the truth may be known. The figure of the light, of frequent occurrence in the New Testament, must always be applied according to the context in which it occurs. If this be remembered, there is no difficulty in understanding the figure as used here.

No man, says Jesus, lights a lamp and then places it where it cannot be seen. God has thus lighted a lamp. He made known His will to the people; He sent His only Son Jesus Christ and, through Him, placed the Light of Revelation before the eyes of all (cf. Jo. i, 5). This meaning results from the examples just given. The light of truth was brought to the queen of the south and to the men of Nineve; and it was also brought to the hearers of Jesus.

But man must bring the light that is within him to the light which God has enkindled. *The light of thy body is thy eye* cannot, in the present context, refer to the intention; for there is no word concerning intention in the present discourse. It refers to the intellect and reason which tend to

also will be full of darkness. (35) Look therefore whether the light which is in thee be not darkness. (36) If then thy whole body be filled with light, having no part of darkness, it shall be wholly filled with light, and as a bright lamp shall enlighten thee.

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the truth. Grace and light are offered by God; but man must also open the eyes of his mind to this truth. *If thy eye be sound*, normal and healthy, the whole body is flooded with light; but if the eye be *evil*, diseased, the whole body will be in darkness. As the diseased eye distorts and obscures objects so that the body may be said to be in darkness, so also the intellect, if distorted and diseased by passion and prejudice, plunges the soul in darkness. This is one of the causes that prevent them from coming to the truth, that lead them to claim that the works of Jesus are not sufficient for belief. *Look therefore whether the light which is in thee be not darkness.* Light may become darkness, in the moral and spiritual order. The powers of intellect, given man to lead him to the truth, may lead him to error if misused; and thus the purpose of these faculties is not obtained. What was light, man makes darkness.

Those who received the proffered light with sincere and open minds, are daily illumined by the truth. The tautology of verse 36 is only apparent. In the protasis, the accent is on *whole body*, which is further explained by *having no darkness*; in the apodosis, the accent is on *filled with light*, which is further explained by *as a bright lamp shall enlighten thee*. The sense is: The greater the purity of mind, the freer it is from prejudice and preoccupation, the greater will be the illumination of the soul.

#### *Denunciation of Pharisaism. XI, 37-54*

A similar denunciation is found in Mt. xxiii. The two are not the same; for the time, place and circumstances differ. There is also a

(37) And as he was speaking, a certain Pharisee asked him to dine with him. And going in, he sat down to meat. (38) And the Pharisee seeing, wondered that he was not first washed before dinner. (39) And the Lord said to him: Now, you Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but your inward part is full of rapine and

difference in the text of the denunciation, and here a distinction between what was addressed to the scribes and what to the Pharisees. Besides, Lk. xx, 45-47 gives a second denunciation, in the same circumstances as the one recorded in Mt.

A certain Pharisee invited Jesus into his home and Jesus accepted the invitation. As they sat down to table, *the Pharisee wondered that He was not washed before dinner.* Jesus had just come in from the multitude and the Pharisee, according to his rule, expected Him to go through the painstaking ceremony of washing His hands in order to cleanse Himself from any possible defilement. The washing, here referred to, was not the ordinary act of cleanliness or etiquette, but a religious ceremony based upon Pharisaic traditions and formalism. The Rabbinical Schools argued long and bitterly on the proper procedure, many minute rules were laid down, and it became one of the all-important acts in the life of the Pharisee.

The *now* in the reply of Jesus most probably expresses a contrast between the past and the present. If the Pharisees were the outgrowth of the Assideans, they were formerly animated with true religious zeal; but they had degenerated and were given over to mere formalism. They make *clean the outside*, being scrupulous in the observance of external forms and ceremonies; but their *inward part*, their soul they neglected. They were like cups, clean without and unclean within.

Jesus shows the folly of this attention to mere externals, this Puritanical cleanliness, without taking heed to the in-

iniquity. (40) You fools, did not he that made the outside, also make the inside? (41) But yet, give alms of that which is within; and behold, all things are clean unto you. (42) But woe to you Pharisees, because you tithe mint, and rue, and every herb; and pass over the judgment and charity of God. Now these things you ought to have done, and not

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terior. They are designated as *fools*, and their folly is shown by the question: *Did not he that made the outside, make also the inside?* If they kept the external clean out of reverence for God and thought that they were thereby pleasing Him, they should also keep the interior, the soul, clean and holy. Both are from God; and God cannot be served with a clean body and unclean soul. Jesus mentions one way of obtaining this interior cleanliness. *That which is within* (τὰ ἐνὸντα), i.e., within the cups and dishes. From the context, it seems that the more probable meaning is: In order that you may not contract defilement from your meals, give alms (rather than resort to useless formalities, as the frequent washing of hands). *All things are clean unto you*, by reason of the context, is to be restricted to food, dishes, etc., and is not to be applied to all things absolutely and without restriction.

Jesus pronounces woe upon the Pharisees because of their care in minute and little things while neglecting the internal and weighty matters of the Law. They *tithe mint and rue and every herb*. The law regarding the paying of tithes, i.e., a tenth part, is contained in Lev. xxvii, 30 ff. and in Dt. xiv, 22 ff. The objects covered by the law were fruits, corn, wine, oil, oxen, sheep, goats. "Mint" is an aromatic herb used as a condiment and perfume; "rue" is a small herb supposed to possess medicinal value. In paying tithes on these herbs, the Pharisees did more than the Law required; yet they *pass over the judgment and the charity of God*, they are without fear or love of God. Jesus does not



to leave the other undone. (43) Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the first seats in the synagogue and salutation in the market places. (44) Woe to you, because you are as graves that appear not, and men that walk over them know it not. (45) And one of the lawyers answering, saith to him: Master, in saying these things, thou reproachest

condemn them for doing more than the Law required, but He does condemn them for omitting that which was of first importance and from which these other works received their value.

A second woe is pronounced against them for seeking their own honor. They *love*, they not only accept but they seek after the honor and esteem of men. The *first seats in the synagogue* were places of honor, on a raised platform and facing the people, where all might see and admire them. The *salutations* are not ordinary greetings but the deferential salutation of inferior to superior. They sought such honors and marks of esteem without reason, as is shown in the third woe pronounced against them.

The Pharisees are like *graves that appear not*. This is not the same as the designation in Matthew, where they are called "whited sepulchres." Graves that appear not are graves that are hidden and unnoticed. In order to avoid coming into contact with graves and contracting legal defilement, graves were covered with lime when not otherwise marked. The Pharisees are here compared to unmarked graves. They do not appear to be what they really are; and those who come into contact with them do not know the wickedness which is hidden under their show of piety. Consorting with them, the people become contaminated and morally unclean.

One of the lawyers present raises objection to the words of Jesus and declares: *In saying these things, thou reproachest us also*. Many of the lawyers belonged to the

said: I will send them prophets and apostles; and some of them they will kill and persecute, (50) that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, (51) from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias who was slain between the altar and the sanctuary. Yea, I say to you: It shall be required of this generation. (52) Woe to you lawyers, because you have taken away the key of knowledge; you yourselves have not entered in, and those that were entering in you have hindered.

*and apostles; and some of them they will kill and persecute.* Jesus is not here quoting the Sacred Scripture, neither is He speaking of Himself. Speaking after the manner of the prophets, He declares the counsels of God. That which God has decreed is spoken of as the "wisdom of God."

As a result of their persecution of those sent from God, *the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required from this generation.* It is by reason of the moral solidarity between the crimes and criminals of all times that Jesus speaks of holding the present generation responsible for all unjust homicides. The present generation shall be more severely punished because they acted with greater malice and did not profit by the past. The murder of Abel is recorded in Genesis and the murder of Zacharias in II Paralipomenon. These two books are the first and last respectively in the Hebrew Canon of the Sacred Books. They are the first and last recorded murders. In both there was a cry for vengeance. Of Abel it was said: The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the earth; and of Zacharias: The Lord see and require. A third woe is pronounced upon the lawyers because they have taken away the key of knowledge, i.e., the power which brings knowledge, the Sacred Scriptures. There is no foundation for the view that the lawyers carried a key as

us also. (46) But he said: Woe also to you lawyers, because you load men with burdens which are grievous to bear, and you yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. (47) Woe to you, for you build the monuments of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. (48) Truly, you are witnesses and give consent to the works of your fathers; for they indeed killed the prophets, and you build their monuments. (49) For this cause the wisdom of God

party of the Pharisees. The condemnation of Pharisaism was a condemnation of the lawyers; for the former followed the traditions and interpretation of the latter. The lawyer, with pride and conceit, warns Jesus that He is also condemning the great and learned men of the law. Jesus pronounces woe upon the lawyers also; because they *load men with burdens which are grievous to bear*. The Law itself was a burden (cf. Ac. xv, 10; Gal. v, 1). The lawyers or scribes, by adding their many minute and burdensome interpretations and insisting upon them as of equal value with the Law, had placed an intolerable burden upon the people. But they themselves *touch not the burdens*, i.e., they made no effort to aid the people in bearing the burden; or rather, they themselves made no attempt to carry the burden they placed on others, always capable of finding some excuse for themselves.

These apparently zealous and rigorous defenders of the Law are filled with the same hatred for true worshippers as were those who slew the prophets of old. They *build the monuments of the prophets*, and thereby claim they were honoring the prophets. But Jesus explains it as celebrating and completing the crimes of those who killed the prophets. Building the monuments, they condemn the sins of their fathers, imitating the sins of their fathers, their condemnation is turned against them. Jesus shows the justice of this retort: *The wisdom of God said: I will send them prophets*

(53) And as he went out, the Pharisees and lawyers began violently to urge him and to provoke him to answer about many things, (54) lying in wait for him and seeking to catch something from his mouth, that they might accuse him.

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the symbol of their office; neither is it true that the people had no access to the Written Word. The lawyers took away the key of knowledge by neglecting instruction in the Word of God and hiding the true meaning of the Scriptures by their traditions. They did not enter into the true meaning of the Scriptures and did not come to the knowledge of the truth. Those who wished to enter, or were on the point of entering, were hindered from doing so by the lawyers. A case of this hindering the people from coming to the knowledge of the truth was given above, verses 15-16.

In a few words St. Luke describes the result of this denunciation. As Jesus was leaving the house, the Pharisees and lawyers began to fling at Him many and subtle questions, demanding an immediate reply. They hoped that He would answer in a manner that would give them opportunity of bringing an accusation against Him.

## Chapter XII

(1) And when great multitudes were gathered together, so that they trod one upon another, he began to say to his disciples, first of all: Beware you of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. (2) For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hidden that shall not

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### *The Fear of Men.* XII, 1-12

The present discourse is closely connected with the preceding event and occasioned by it. The apostles and the people outside the house where Jesus had denounced the Pharisees witnessed their opposition to Him. Jesus admonishes them not to be deceived by the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and presents several reasons for putting away fear of men. His words were principally addressed to the apostles; St. Luke says He spoke to them *first*.

THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES (1-3). *Leaven* is fermenting dough, or anything that causes fermentation. In Sacred Scripture it is used as a figure or type of that which is evil and causes corruption (cf. I Cor. v, 8; Gal. v, 9). The parable of the leaven, Lk. xiii, 20-21, is the only exception to this usage. *Hypocrisy* is the leaven of the Pharisees; the influence which corrupted them and tended to corrupt others. Their life was full of hypocrisy. This simulation infests and corrupts all that is good in man. Jesus issues a warning lest others be deceived by their show of piety; and He warns all to avoid this vice.

Hypocrisy is to be avoided, for *there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed*. We have already met this pro-

be known. (3) For whatever you have spoken in the ear in inner-chambers, shall be proclaimed on the housetops.

(4) And I say to you my friends: Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. (5) But I will show you whom you shall fear. Fear him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell. Yea, I say to you, fear him. (6) And are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is for-

verbial saying in connection with the parable of the sower (viii, 17). Here the context gives a different application: Hypocrisy and simulation will be discovered; it cannot always remain hidden. Though a man put on the appearance of piety and goodness, his evil will be manifested either in this life or at the judgment. The thought is enlarged upon by the declaration that neither the darkness nor secret places shall be a guarantee that these things shall not be made known. *Proclaimed on the housetops* is an allusion to the customs of the times. The housetops served as gathering places for the families; and from the housetops public proclamations were made.

FEAR OF MEN (4-12). Jesus gives several reasons or motives for overcoming the fear of men. The first reason is the smallness of the harm they can inflict, and the great harm that results from offending God to please men. Man is able to *kill the body*, but this is the extent of the harm he can inflict upon his fellow men. But God is to be feared who *after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hell*. This undoubtedly refers to God, for He alone has power of condemning man to hell. Christ teaches that all fear of temporal loss is overcome by the fear of the punishments of God. Fear of God is therefore holy and salutary, though it is not the highest motive for avoiding sin.

The second motive is the Providence of God. Five sparrows, says Jesus, are sold for two farthings, the smallest of

gotten in the sight of God? (7) But the very hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows. (8) And I say to you: Every one that shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God. (9) But he that shall deny me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God. (10) And every one that shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but to him that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.

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coins. Yet, *not one of them is forgotten in the sight of God*, for even they are under the care of Divine Providence. But man is under the care of special Providence. *The hairs of your head are numbered* is a proverb expressing special care and protection. Man is of more value than the sparrows; he is under a special protection of Divine Providence. Nothing can happen to him without the will of God; and God will aid him in the time of persecution and difficulty.

The third motive is the hope of reward, promised to them that remain faithful to Christ. *Every one that shall confess me before men*, i.e., every one who professes his faith in Christ, shall be acknowledged by Him as His own. On the contrary, he who denies and rejects Christ before men, shall be rejected by Him. (Cf. ix, 26.)

In verse 10 Jesus speaks of two sins, one against the Son of Man, the other against the Holy Ghost. *A word against the Son of Man*, is something said against Christ as the Messiah. Since He came in the humility of human nature and was subject to suffering and death, there may be some excuse for those who speak against Him. Their sin shall be forgiven, provided the requirements for remission are fulfilled (Sts. Jerome, Cyril, Chrysostom, et al.). The sin committed by those who *blaspheme against the Holy Ghost* possesses a peculiar malice, by reason of which this sin *shall not be forgiven*; it is an everlasting sin (Mk. iii, 29), for-

given neither in this life nor in the next (Mt. xii, 32). What is this blasphemy? The context in Matthew and Mark indicates that it was the accusation made by the Pharisees that Jesus drove out devils by Satan; and this is clearly stated in Mark: "Because they said: He hath an unclean spirit." It was committed by the Pharisees when, out of malice, they attributed the works of Christ to the devil, though they knew full well that these were the works of God (Sts. Jerome, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Basil, Athanasius, Bede). It is certain that Jesus did not speak of any sin, whatsoever it might be, that may be said to be committed against the Holy Ghost. For blasphemy properly consists in words. Secondly, the Gospel states that the Pharisees were guilty (at least materially) of this sin when they said: "He hath an unclean spirit." Thirdly, the sin is not specifically one of the six sins against the Holy Ghost, though it includes several of them: (a) Resisting the known truth, since the Pharisees knew that the works of Jesus were not from the evil spirit and made the statement out of malice and prejudice; (b) Envy at another's spiritual good, since they made the accusation to keep the people from faith in Christ and to prevent the growth of grace in the hearts of men; (c) Obstinacy in sin, since the accusation was made in order that they might reject Christ and be free to continue in their evil ways. And to this is added the spoken word uttered openly and before others. Considering these circumstances, the *blasphemy against the Holy Ghost* may be defined: The sin of those who, knowingly and willfully and with malice, ascribe the works of God to the evil spirit in order that they may continue in their own sins and lead others from the truth and grace of God. This sin *shall not be forgiven*. It is properly called "the unforgiven sin" and not "the unpardonable sin." The reason is: They who, through malice against the known truth and in order to lead others to sin, assert that the works of Christ are the works



(11) And when they bring you into the synagogues, and to magistrates and authorities, be not anxious how or what you shall say; (12) for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what you must say.

(13) And one of the multitude said to him: Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me.

of the devil, shut off all approach of God's grace and willfully deliver themselves over to Satan (Sts. Hilary, Athanasius, Chrysostom, Jerome, Didymus, Paschasius, Bede). Others hold that the sin is not forgiven in the ordinary economy of grace, but may be forgiven through a miracle of grace (St. Thomas, a Lapide).

The fourth motive for removing the fear of men and of persecution is the promise of aid from the Holy Spirit. When the disciple of Christ is brought before the persecutors to give an account of his faith, he is not to be solicitous and uneasy regarding what he shall say. *For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what you must say.* We must remember that this promise is made only for the time of persecution. Then the disciple of Christ should expect and confide in the aid of the Holy Ghost. For other times, the times of peace, such special aid is not promised.

#### *Avarice.* XII, 13-21

The occasion for the present warning was given by a certain man who brought the request: *Speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me.* We are not told whether or not the man was making a just request. Since Jesus did not grant the request, some think that he had no just claim against his brother. But it is probable that his claim was just; he desired that his brother give him his portion of the inheritance.

Jesus refuses the request by stating: *Who hath appointed*

(14) But he said to him: Man, who hath appointed me judge or divider over you? (15) And he said to them: Take heed and beware of all covetousness; for a man's life doth not consist in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. (16) And he spoke a parable to them, saying: The land of a certain rich man brought forth fruit abundantly. (17) And he reasoned with himself, saying: What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow my fruits? (18) And he said: This will I do; I will pull down my barns

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*me judge or divider over you?* The request is refused, not so much because it might be unjust but because Jesus did not come to act as arbiter in such disputes. Civil laws were drawn up for the division of an inheritance and the mode of procedure in particular cases was determined. The reply of Jesus is according to the mind of the petitioner. He asked the services of Jesus, as if His office were to decide in such matters. But Jesus was not appointed, He was not come, for this purpose.

Turning to those about Him, Jesus admonishes them to *beware of all avarice*, be it in small or in great things, be it a desire to possess another's goods or too great an attachment to one's own property. *A man's life doth not consist in the abundance of that which he possesseth*, but it consists in something higher and nobler than these petty possessions. Man's aim should not be riches, the purpose of his life is not to amass wealth. And the measure of his life is not extended with the abundance of riches.

THE RICH FOOL (16-20). This parable illustrates the truth just expressed. Jesus represents the lands of a rich man as bringing forth much fruit. Though it is not yet the time of harvest, as we learn from the parable, the flourishing condition of the crops gave promise of an abundant harvest. The harvest promised to be so great that the old barns would be too small to hold the fruits. The rich

and build greater; and into them will I gather all the things that are grown to me, and my goods; (19) and will say to my soul: Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thy rest; eat, drink, make good cheer. (20) But God said to him: Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee; and those things which thou hast provided, whose shall they be? (21) So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.

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man takes counsel with himself, not how he shall use these fruits but how he shall keep them. He sees but one way out of the difficulty and that is to tear down his barns and build greater. His selfishness and avarice is emphasized in the soliloquy; he speaks of *my* fruits, *my* barns, *my* goods, things grown to *me*. He continues: *I will say to my soul: Thou hast much goods laid up for many years.* He is wholly intent upon his possessions and upon how he may enjoy them, promising himself many years as though he had reaped them from his fields.

In the midst of this joyous anticipation, he is called out of this life. The "speaking of God" pertains merely to the form of the parable and we need not inquire how God spoke to him. It suffices that he was overtaken by death, willed by God. The rich man is designated as a fool, the usual Scripture designation for the wicked. His folly was manifested in his monologue and now becomes more evident. Even as he plans many more years of pleasure, his life is taken from him and he is left poor and miserable, losing all he possessed and not knowing who would enjoy the fruits of his labor.

Jesus adds a lesson and also indicates why this rich man was condemned. *He that layeth up treasure for himself* is one who multiplies worldly goods for himself alone and for his own gratification; he is *rich towards God* who abounds in merits and good works, who uses the things of the world

(22) And he said to his disciples: Therefore I say to you: Be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat; nor for your body, what you shall put on. (23) The life is more than the food, and the body is more than the clothing.

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according to the will of God. This conclusion, together with the introduction to the parable, teaches the folly of seeking the things of this world to the neglect of the soul and the things of eternity. Man may amass great wealth, but at the hour he knows not these things will be taken from him and he is left poor and miserable, a "fool," unless he has sent before him riches for life eternal.

### *Worldly Solicitude.* XII, 22-34

This instruction follows immediately and as a conclusion from the preceding. Jesus again directly addresses the disciples and warns them against the root and source of the vice of avarice: solicitude and lack of confidence in God. The solicitude here spoken of is not the ordinary care a man takes in the things of this life or in providing for the future. For (a) The instruction follows as a conclusion from the warning against avarice. This shows that the solicitude, against which warning is issued, is a part of avarice and reducible to it. (b) The solicitude here spoken of is opposed to Divine Providence, or is due to a lack of confidence in God. (c) It is a futile care, like that of the Pagan, and causes a man to seek first the things of the world rather than the Kingdom of God. Jesus uses the two most ordinary objects of man's care and anxiety, food and clothing, and presents several reasons for putting away this disturbing and anxious care.

After the admonition to put away solicitude and anxiety regarding food and clothing, Jesus gives various motives or reasons that should move man to follow the admonition. The first reason is that the *life is more than the food and the body more than the clothing*. The greater have been received gratis and without labor; He who gave the greater, can also provide for the smaller. There are things of

(24) Consider the ravens; for they sow not, neither do they reap, neither have they storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! (25) And which of you, by taking anxious thought, can add to his stature one cubit? (26) If then you are not able to do even the least thing, why are you solicitous for

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greater value, objects more worthy of care than food and clothing.

The second motive is the Providence of God, who watches over the birds of the air. Jesus calls attention to the ravens which neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. They are fed by the Heavenly Father. The ravens, of course, must go in search of food; they must do that which is possible according to their nature and faculties. So also man is to do what right order demands, according to his nature and faculties; but while he does this he must rely upon the Providence of God. Already St. Chrysostom pointed out that this saying does not mean that man is not to work, but that he must not be over-anxious, lacking in confidence in God. For if God watches over the birds of the air, He will also watch over man.

The third motive for putting away this worldly anxiety is found in its futility. Many prefer to read *age* instead of *stature* in verse 25. The Greek admits of either translation. For *age*, the following is presented: Not many, if any, are anxious to increase their stature, but most men give anxious thought to the prolongation of their lives; and immediately, in verse 26, the addition of a cubit is spoken of as the *least thing*, which would hardly be true in one's stature. In favor of retaining *stature*, it is argued: The cubit is not considered in actual measurement but merely as a unit of measure and may be understood in the sense of "anything"; and life is not measured by a rule. The thought is the same in both readings. If you cannot add to

the rest? (27) Consider the lilies, how they grow; they labor not, neither do they spin; yet I say to you: Not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed like one of them. (28) Now if God doth so clothe the grass that is in the field today and is cast in the oven tomorrow, how much more you, O you of little faith? (29) And seek not what you shall eat and what you shall drink, and be not troubled in mind. (30) For all these things do the nations of the world seek. But your Father knoweth that you have need of these

life or stature by all your anxious thought, why be solicitous about the rest?

Jesus next calls attention to the *lilies*, under which term is designated a variety of flowers that grow in the fields. They are an ornament which God has placed on the earth; and they exceed the beauty and glory of Solomon who was not arrayed like them. The flowers are designated as the *grass that is in the field* because they are gathered up with the turf and used as fuel. If God takes such care of the flowers that pass away and are considered of so little value by man, how much more will His care extend to men? The appellation is added *you of little faith* because over-anxiety in the things of life shows a lack of confidence in God and is, in a certain sense, a lack of faith. Worldly solicitude, here spoken of, shows lack of sufficient faith and confidence in God.

A fourth reason for avoiding this solicitude is that it is the mark of the Pagan. The *nations of the world* are the Gentiles or Pagans. The Christian is not to be like them. The Pagan has no hope for anything but what this present life gives and he knows nothing of the Heavenly Father. The Christian must have higher standards and should place all his care in the hands of the Heavenly Father who knows that he has need of these things. Worldly solicitude, of which Jesus speaks, is Pagan.

things. (31) But seek you first the Kingdom of God and his justice; and all these things shall be added unto you.

(32) Fear not, little flock; for it hath pleased the Father to give you a kingdom. (33) Sell what you have and give alms; make unto yourselves purses that grow not old, a treasure in heaven which faileth not; where no thief ap-

Jesus now gives the great rule for the Christian's life: *Seek you first the Kingdom of God and His justice.* To seek first does not mean that seeking after other things, or care in other matters, is absolutely forbidden. Other things necessary for life may be sought; but the seeking after them must be made secondary to seeking after the Kingdom of God. Other things are not to be sought in such a manner as to keep man from the Kingdom, with such fervor and anxiety as if everything depended upon them. Before all things, first and as the most worthy of all endeavors, the Christian must seek the Kingdom of God, i.e., strive to obtain the Kingdom, to be made worthy of participation in its graces and favors. He must seek the "justice of God," i.e., holiness and sanctity by the observance of the commandments.

In verses 32-34 Jesus more directly addresses His disciples. The followers of Jesus are called a *little flock* either because there were then but few who followed Him or because they are "little" in the eyes of the world. He, the Good Shepherd, assures His flock that their seeking after the Kingdom will not be in vain; for the Kingdom has been prepared and is given to them that seek after it. Jesus adds the counsel that they are to be ready to part with all things of this world (cf. I Cor. vii, 30). If they are to seek the Kingdom of God first and foremost, they will become poor in this world in order that they may possess riches in the world to come. Money cannot buy Heaven; but money used to relieve the poor can merit a reward in Heaven. Us-

proacheth nor moth corrupteth. (34) For where your treasure is, there also will be your heart.

(35) Let your loins be girt and your lamps burning.

(36) And you yourselves be like unto men waiting for their lord, when he shall return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately.

ing the terms of treasure-seeking and hoarding, Jesus advises them to make bags that grow not old and will not, therefore, allow the treasure to be lost; and these treasures, acquired through alms-giving and laid up in Heaven, are free from the attacks of robbers and the corrosion of the moth.

*Where your treasure is, there also will be your heart.* The heart is used in the Synoptic Gospels as the symbol of the inner life of man: His conscious thoughts (cf. Lk. ii, 51; Mt. ix, 4); His understanding and will (cf. Mk. vi, 25; Mt. xiii, 15); His dispositions, sentiments and characteristics (cf. Mt. xi, 29; Mk. iii, 5); His emotions (cf. Lk. xxiv, 32); in a word, the entire personality of man. Where a man has his treasure, be it in Heaven or on earth, thither is his whole being bent.

### *Vigilance.* XII, 35-48

The instruction on vigilance is a continuation of the discourse to the apostles. It consists of three parables: the Vigilant Servants; the Thief in the Night; the Faithful Steward.

**VIGILANT SERVANTS (35-38).** In this parable Jesus uses the image of servants awaiting the return of their master from a wedding feast. It opens with the admonition: *Let your loins be girt and your lamps burning*, wherein the parable and its application are fused. According to the usage of Sacred Scripture and of the Classics, to "gird the loins" did not mean merely to wear the girdle but to have the garment tucked in at the girdle. The long garments of the Orient are a hindrance to activity. The servants must



(37) Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh, shall find watching. Amen, I say to you: He will gird himself and make them sit down to meat, and shall come and serve them. (38) And if he shall come in the second watch or in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. (39) But this know you, that if the householder had known at what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not have let his house be broken

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be ready for the service of their master, bearing lamps to light his way, for he returns at night. In the application of the parable to the moral order, we understand that the Christian must always be on guard, always ready to receive the Lord when He comes. And this preparation and vigilance must be continuous. The servants do not know at what hour their master will return to his home, and so must be on the watch throughout the night. So also man must be prepared for the Lord throughout his entire life.

The servants are blessed if their master finds them watching; so also is man blessed if the Lord finds him watching, when He comes. And as the master of the servants rewards them and ministers to them, so also will the Lord reward those whom He finds prepared for His coming. Again the warning on the uncertainty of the hour is given. The night was divided into four watches of three hours each, as previously noted. Verse 38 makes mention of only two, the second and the third; but as these included the time from early evening until early morning, they must be on their watch at all times. So also must man always be vigilant, prepared to meet his Lord.

**THE THIEF IN THE NIGHT (39-40).** By a change in the image, Jesus teaches the same lesson, emphasizing the uncertainty of the time. If a man knew at what hour the thief would come, he certainly would watch at that hour. Since he does not know at what hour the thief comes, he

open. (40) Be you also ready; for at an hour that you think not the Son of Man shall come.

(41) And Peter said to him: Lord, dost thou speak this parable to us, or likewise to all? (42) And the Lord said: Who is the faithful and wise steward, whom the lord shall set over his household to give them their portion of food in due season? (43) Blessed is that servant, whom the lord when he cometh, shall find so doing. (44) Verily, I say to you that he will set him over all that he hath. (45) But if that servant shall say in his heart: My lord delayeth coming;

must always be on his guard. The obvious lesson is given that man should always be on his guard, *for at an hour that you think not, the Son of Man shall come*. The time of death, the coming of Jesus, is uncertain.

THE FAITHFUL STEWARD (41-48). Peter interrupts to ask a question. He desires to know whether the parables were intended for the apostles alone or for all. The reason for the question seems to be that Jesus had spoken of matters that pertained especially to the apostles. Jesus replies with the parable of the Faithful Steward, showing that the parable applied to all.

*Who is the faithful and wise steward*, i.e., who is the steward who is faithful and prudent in the discharge of his duty? Such a steward is placed over the Lord's family to give them their measure of wheat in due season. Jesus thus leaves His hearers to draw the conclusion. A servant is happy indeed, if his master find him faithful in the discharge of his duties. For he is placed over all the master's possessions, a reward frequently granted to faithful servants. Hence, any servant who does his master's will and administers his charge faithfully will be rewarded.

Jesus turns to the opposite, taking into consideration the possibility of unfaithfulness. If the servant *say in his heart*, i.e., think, that the master is long in coming, and by reason

and shall begin to strike the menservants and the maid-servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, (46) the lord of that servant shall come in a day that he expecteth not and at an hour that he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder and appoint his portion with unbelievers. (47) And that servant who knew the will of his lord and made not ready and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. (48) But he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, from him much shall be required; and to whom they have committed much, of him will they demand the more.

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of the delay begin to abuse those under his charge and pay no attention to the fulfillment of his duty, the master will come unexpectedly and mete out punishment. The master *shall cut him asunder*, inflict the death penalty upon him. Here there is reference to the absolute power of life and death exercised over servants in the Orient and in Rome. In the final clause of verse 46, the parable and its application blend and become one. *Appoint his portion with unbelievers* refers rather to the application of the parable. As the master puts the unfaithful servant to death, so shall God punish the unfaithful Christian with the unbelievers.

To the parable is added the rule to be used in judging men. The servant who knows the master's will and does not act accordingly, is punished with many stripes; but he that did not know the master's will and did that which was worthy of punishment, shall be punished with fewer stripes. For *to whomsoever much is given, from him much shall be required*. Those who have received more and greater gifts from God shall be judged and punished more severely than those who have received less; each must give an account according to what he has received and what has been committed to him. St. Peter's question is answered. All must

(49) I am come to cast fire on the earth; and what will I but that it be kindled? (50) And I have a baptism wherewith I am to be baptized; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! (51) Think you that I am come to give

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be on the watch and prepared for the coming of the Lord, the servant as well as the steward. Both must render an account of the discharge of their respective office and position; and the account must be made according to the favors which each has received. The admonition to vigilance and faithful discharge of duty applies to all.

### *Persecution.* XII, 49-53

The verses under this title are a continuation of the discourse which seems to return to its starting-point. Verses 1-2 spoke of opposition to Christ; and He now speaks again of this opposition as extending to His followers.

Jesus first speaks of the purpose of His coming into this world. He is come *to cast fire on the earth*. Fire burns, destroys and purifies. In the Old Testament, God is spoken of as a consuming fire (Dt. iv, 24; ix, 3), and the Messiah as a refining fire (Mal. iii, 2). Jesus came to cast fire on the earth, i.e., to burn away and destroy what is sinful and to purify the hearts of men. It is His ardent, His one desire that this consuming and purifying fire be enkindled, that sin be destroyed and holiness reign. The "fire" is the Messianic Work, accomplished by Jesus and continued in the Church.

The enkindling of this holy fire will be accompanied by suffering and persecution; and the first to suffer is Jesus. He refers to His death as a *baptism* (cf. Mk. x, 38). The figure is found, in a certain sense, in the Old Testament where floods and waters are an image of suffering and tribulation (cf. Ps. xvii, 17; lxv, 12; lxxviii, 1). "He had

peace on the earth? I tell you: No, but separation. (52) For from henceforth, there shall be five in one house divided; three against two and two against three. (53) They shall be divided: father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

(54) And he said also to the multitudes: When you see a cloud rising from the west, immediately you say: A shower

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first to be bathed in His own blood before the fire of the Spirit could be enkindled" (Bede). Jesus is *straitened till it be accomplished*, i.e., afflicted by the thought of the sufferings He is to endure (cf. Jo. xii, 27).

From Himself, Jesus turns to His followers who must also suffer persecution and tribulation. Jesus came to establish peace, a true interior peace which is not incompatible with suffering and tribulation. He did not come to establish a peace by force and conquest, as many of His hearers expected. It is of such a peace that He speaks when He declares that He is not come to establish peace. The establishment of true and internal peace, the enkindling of the fire of virtue and zeal among men, will bring a struggle, a struggle that means separation. The whole world was divided at the preaching of Christ, each home possessed believers and unbelievers, and thus were members of the same household divided against one another. The division and separation, spoken of in verses 52-53, is a division because of religion and the pursuit of virtue.

### *Signs of the Times.* XII, 54-59

Jesus calls attention to the manner in which they were able, by natural signs, to forecast the weather. *A cloud rising from the west* came from the sea and bore showers;

is coming; and so it happeneth; (55) and when you see the south wind blow, you say: There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. (56) You hypocrites, you know how to interpret the face of heaven and of the earth; but how is it that you do not know to interpret this time? (57) And why even of yourselves do you not judge that which is just? (58) For when thou goest with thy adversary to the prince, endeavor

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*the south wind*, coming from the Arabian desert, brought heat with it. By observation, the people had learned to understand these signs and forecast the weather. But they failed to understand other signs, they were unable to *discern this time*, i.e., the time of the Messias. The fact that Jesus characterizes them as *hypocrites* shows the reason why they fail to understand the signs of the time; their piety and zeal for spiritual matters is merely external. Out of their own hearts and conscience they should be able to draw the correct conclusion. They had heard the preaching of St. John the Baptist, they had heard the preaching and witnessed the miracles of Jesus. They could not be ignorant of all that had transpired, and had therefore received sufficient signs of the time.

Jesus indicates what should be done because of the times. To the announcement of the Kingdom of God was added an exhortation to penance. Thus had St. John, Jesus and the apostles preached. In the prophecies, the coming of the Messias was spoken of as a time of punishment of the wicked. Nothing is of greater importance than that men turn from sin and do penance. This is taught in the brief example or parable that follows (vv. 58-59). Jesus represents a man on the way to trial with an adversary who seems to have a just claim that will be decided in his favor. Among the ancients, both parties in a case had to appear in court together; hence the image of the two men, plaintiff and defendant, on their way to court. The advice is given to

to be delivered from him whilst on the way; lest perhaps he draw thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the exacter, and the exacter cast thee into prison. (59) I say to thee: Thou shalt not come out thence until thou pay the very last mite.

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satisfy the adversary while on the way, before the case has been submitted to the judge. For if the matter is brought before the judge, strict and impartial justice will prevail. The *exacter* was an official who kept record of fines imposed. Being cast into prison, the man will be required to pay the debt to the last mite.

The lesson is evident. Jesus advises His hearers to do penance, to satisfy the adversary *while in the way*, i.e., during life. Now is the time of mercy and pardon; but should they come to judgment, justice will hold sway. It is not necessary that each individual feature of the example be applied to the moral and spiritual order. The following may be said: *In the way* indicates the present life, before man is brought before the judgment seat of Christ; *The adversary*, with whom man is to make peace, is either the Law or conscience, in so far as they accuse man of the sin he has committed; *The prison*, is the place of punishment in the next life. The punishment will continue until all the debt of sin is paid; if this debt cannot be paid, the punishment will not cease.

## Chapter XIII

(1) And at that hour there were some present who told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. (2) And answering, he said to them: Think you that these Galileans were sinners above all the men of Galilee because they suffered these things? (3) No, I say

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### *Necessity of Penance.* XIII, 1-9

At the time Jesus was exhorting the people to penance, as seen above, certain persons reported the massacre of the Galileans *whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices*. The murder of these Galileans took place in Jerusalem, for only there could sacrifices be offered. Some take the words literally, in the sense that the massacre occurred in the Temple so that their blood actually mingled with the blood of the animals offered in sacrifice. But this seems impossible, for it requires that both the Galileans and the soldiers of Pilate should have penetrated into the Court of the Priests. According to the sense of the text, it suffices that they were killed by the soldiers of Pilate when in Jerusalem for the purpose of worshipping God by offering sacrifice.

Jesus draws a lesson from the occurrence. He asks whether they consider the murdered men as the greatest sinners of Galilee. The question gives expression to a thought that was in their minds. They considered every temporal misfortune a punishment for personal sin; and since the Galileans were murdered at a time when they were intent upon the worship of God, they must have been great



to you; but unless you do penance you shall all likewise perish. (4) Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them; think you that they also were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? (5) No, I say to you; but unless you do penance you shall all likewise perish. (6) He spoke also this parable: A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit thereon, and found none. (7) And he said to

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sinners. Jesus corrects this view and adds the admonition: *Unless you do penance you shall all likewise perish.* They are also sinners and, unless they do penance for their sins, they shall perish as did the Galileans.

Jesus refers to another current event. *The tower in Siloam*, in the southeastern part of Jerusalem, fell and crushed eighteen workmen. This tower was perhaps one of the towers on the city wall; or it may have been an accident in the construction of the aqueduct of Pilate. As the murder of the Galileans did not prove that they were the greatest sinners in Galilee, so neither did the death of these workmen in Siloam prove that they were the greatest sinners in Jerusalem. And again the warning is added that unless they do penance they shall perish in like manner. Since the murder of the Galileans and the falling of the tower were figures of the Fall of Jerusalem, the present exhortation may be considered as a call to national repentance. This is also taught by the parable that follows.

THE BARREN FIG TREE (7-9). Jesus speaks of a man who had a fig tree planted in his vineyard. The tree did not grow wild; it was planted upon good ground, in a vineyard where it received special care and attention. There was every reason to expect that the tree would bear fruit. But though the owner of the vineyard came frequently, during the space of three years, he found none. The three years of seeking shows the patience of the man; he did not

the vine-dresser: Behold, for these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down therefore; why cumbereth it the ground? (8) But he answering, said to him: Lord, let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it; (9) and if it bear fruit, it is well; but if not, thou shalt cut it down.

(10) And he was teaching in one of their synagogues on the sabbath. (11) And behold, there was a woman who had

act in haste. His patience being finally exhausted, he commands the vine-dresser to cut the tree down. It is not only useless but, standing in the vineyard, renders the ground useless and becomes an encumbrance. The caretaker pleads for the tree. He promises to give it special care during another year. Nothing is said in the parable as to the ultimate fate of the tree, for this was not necessary to teach the lesson intended.

The application is as follows: The *fig tree*, the object of special care, is a figure of the Chosen People upon whom God had showered special graces and favors. The *three years* and the frequent visits of the lord of the vineyard illustrate the forbearance of God who had frequently sought the fruits of penance and good works. The *one year* indicates that a definite time is set in which the nation is to do penance if its ruin is to be averted. The parable may be applied, in a secondary sense, to individuals.

### *Cure of the Infirm Woman.* XIII, 10-17

This miracle, as we learn in verse 10, took place in a synagogue on the sabbath day. Present in the synagogue, where Jesus was teaching, was an infirm woman. She is described as *bowed together, neither could she raise herself up*, her disease being curvature of the spine. From the expression: *Spirit of infirmity*, some conclude that the

a spirit of infirmity eighteen years; and she was bowed together, neither could she raise herself up at all. (12) And Jesus seeing her, called her unto him and said: Woman, thou art loosed from thy infirmity. (13) And he laid his hands upon her and immediately she was made straight and glorified God. (14) And the ruler of the synagogue, being angry that Jesus had healed on the sabbath, said to the multitudes: Six days there are wherein you ought to work. In them therefore come, and be healed; and not on the sab-

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woman was possessed by an evil spirit; yet the text is satisfied by ascribing her disease to punishment for sin.

Her cure is recorded in a few simple words. Jesus, unasked, calls the woman to Him, lays His hands upon her and declares her cured. She was immediately made straight and praised God. The miracle aroused the anger and envy of the *ruler of the synagogue*, the presiding officer whose duty it was to see that law and right order were observed. He declares that the Law has been violated. While pretending zeal for the Law of God, he is in reality actuated by anger because Jesus worked a miracle. He displays the meanest form of hypocrisy, cloaking his evil designs under the guise of piety; and he further displays his spirit by casting blame on the people, assuming the role of protector of their morality against the work of Jesus. The ruler correctly quotes from Dt. v, 13, but his inference is illogical and his application of the Law incorrect. For the people had not come to the synagogue to be cured of their infirmities, neither had the cure of the woman entailed any work forbidden on the sabbath, nor could the ruler promise them a cure if they came on another day. The remarks of the ruler are evidently intended as an accusation against Jesus.

In chapter vi we saw several answers of Jesus in regard to the observance of the sabbath rest; here He uses an *argumentum ad hominem*, drawn from their own traditions.

bath day. (15) And the Lord answered him and said: You hypocrites, doth not each one of you, on the sabbath day, loose his ox or ass from the manger and lead them to water? (16) And ought not this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? (17) And when he said things all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

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On the sabbath, He tells them, they will loose the beast from the manger and lead it to water in order that it might not suffer from thirst. If they are so careful that an animal should not suffer, so careful where their own interests are concerned, their objection to aiding suffering humanity is hypocrisy. *Ought not this daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?* Every word is telling. They relieve the animal, but object to relieving a human being; they untie and lead the animal to water, but object to a single word spoken on the sabbath; they will release an animal which is tied for a few hours, but object to releasing a woman who has been bound by sickness for many years. The argument of Jesus is clear and unanswerable. His adversaries were put to shame; for their hypocrisy was made manifest. They were not concerned with the sanctification of the Lord's Day so much as with accusing Jesus, and they had a higher regard for animals than for man.

### *Two Parables of the Kingdom. XIII, 18-21*

Cf. Mt. xiii, 31-33 and Mk. iv, 30-32, where the two parables are given in a different context. Either Jesus spoke these parables on two distinct occasions or St. Luke has placed them in their proper historical setting. They are closely, grammatically, connected with the preceding miracle. The connection seems to be that the rejoicing of the people

(18) He said therefore: To what is the Kingdom of God like? And whereunto shall I liken it? (19) It is like unto a grain of mustard seed which a man took and cast into his own garden; and it grew and became a great tree, and the birds of the air lodged in its branches. (20) And again he said: Whereunto shall I liken the Kingdom of God? (21) It is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened.

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was, as it were, the germ of the Kingdom of God; or the opposition of the enemies of Christ, as manifested after the miracle, will not impede the growth of the Kingdom.

**THE MUSTARD SEED (18-19).** Jesus declares that the Kingdom of God is like to a grain of mustard seed, which Matthew calls the least of all seeds. But when planted, it grows into a large tree and the birds of the air rest in its branches. The fundamental, if not only, lesson of the parable is evident. As the mustard seed, though small, grows into a large tree and affords place of rest for the birds, so also shall the Kingdom of God, though small and humble in its beginnings, grow and develop into a great empire and embrace all the peoples of the earth. In this parable is described and predicted the extensive growth of the Church, the Kingdom of God.

**THE LEAVEN (20-21).** The Kingdom of God is also like to leaven, fermenting dough, which a woman puts into meal until the whole is leavened. *Three measures of meal* constituted one baking, as a rule; and therefore no special application is to be given to the amount of meal used. The leaven works in the meal, ferments it and causes a change. Again the fundamental, and perhaps sole, lesson of the parable is evident. As the leaven, placed in the meal, changes it, so also the Kingdom of God, established in the world, changes and transforms the hearts of men by the power and efficacy of its doctrine and grace. This parable describes

(22) And he went through the cities and towns teaching and making his journey to Jerusalem.

(23) And a certain man said to him: Lord, are they few that are saved? But he said to him: (24) Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able (25) when once the master of the house shall have risen and shut the door. And you shall

and foretells the intensive growth of the Kingdom in the hearts of men, its power and efficacy.

*Danger of Exclusion from the Kingdom. XIII, 23-30*

As Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem, a certain man asks Him: *Lord, are they few that are saved?* The identity of this man is unknown, as is also the reason for the question. Since the Gospel in no wise indicates the reason or the motive, we may say with St. Cyril that he asked a useless and unprofitable question. Jesus does not answer it. But He makes it the occasion for teaching that which is both useful and profitable. It may not be out of place to note here that the question and the answer of our Lord is given in the present tense. The construction of the Lord's reply presents some difficulty which we have attempted to solve by placing a full stop after the first clause in verse 25.

Jesus first replies with the admonition: *Strive to enter by the narrow gate.* To "strive" means to exercise the greatest efforts, to work as those work who strive to gain the mastery in the games. The Greek verb used here for "strive" is the verb used in speaking of the efforts of athletes in the games. The present tense denotes that the work is to be done now and continued. Changing to the future, Jesus states that *many shall seek to enter and shall not be able.* To "seek," according to the text, is very different from "strive"; it denotes that one may now not strive but at

stand without and knock at the door, saying: Lord, open to us; and he answering, shall say to you: I know you not, whence you are. (26) Then shall you begin to say: We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. (27) And he shall say to you: I know you not, whence you are; depart from me, you workers of iniquity.

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some later time have the wish or desire to enter. They shall not be able to enter, because they shall come *when once the master of the house shall have risen and shut the door*, i.e., when the time of salvation is past.

THE CLOSED DOOR (25-30). This parable illustrates the many who shall seek to enter and shall not be able. *The closed door* represents the time of death, or the time allotted for man to work out his salvation. Before the door is closed, everyone must strive to enter. From the use of the second person it seems that the immediate application is to the hearers of Jesus. The door is open, they are receiving the invitation. Many are not accepting the invitation and are making no endeavor to enter. At some future time they shall seek to enter, but shall find the door closed.

To their request that the master of the house open the door for them, he declares that he does not know them. The parable and its application again blend together. They plead their cause by citing the familiarity that has existed between them and the master: *We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets*, which is literally true of the hearers of Jesus, who is the Master of the house. But this avails them nothing, and the reason is that they are *workers of iniquity*. The Lord does not recognize them as His friends, for they have not lived as His friends and the privileges granted them in the past were abused and misused.

The parable becomes more specifically directed to the hearers of Jesus. He declares that they shall see Abraham,

(28) There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves cast out. (29) And they shall come from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God. (30) And behold, there are last that shall be first, and first that shall be last.

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Isaac and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, while they are cast out. Mere carnal descent from the Patriarchs, mere nominal membership among the People of God, does not avail unto salvation. In place of those cast out shall come the Gentiles; from the east and the west, from the north and the south, they shall come to take their place in the Kingdom of God. Whence it happens that *there are last that shall be first, and first that shall be last.* Those who are now "last," considered as the least worthy of the Kingdom, shall be "first" in the Kingdom; while those who are now "first," Israel, shall be "last."

The first meaning of the parable is: Many shall be lost, many shall be saved. Salvation does not depend upon nationality and race, nor upon the favors and privileges one may have received; but it depends on striving to do good and avoid the works of iniquity. It is of no profit to speculate upon the number of the saved and lost; but it is of the utmost importance to strive to enter by the narrow gate before the door is closed and the time of salvation has passed. It may be noted that there is no mention of numbers in the parable, no comparison between the number of those who enter and those who remain without.

*Herod's Cunning. The Death of Jesus. XIII, 31-35*

On the day that Jesus gave the above instruction, certain Pharisees came to Him and warned Him to depart, for



(31) On the same day there came some of the Pharisees, saying to him: Depart, and go hence; for Herod hath a mind to kill thee. (32) And he said to them: Go, and tell that fox: Behold, I cast out devils and do cures, today and tomorrow, and the third day I am consummated. (33) Nevertheless, I must walk today and tomorrow and the

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Herod had a mind to kill Him. From the fact that Jesus receives the report as true and does not denounce the Pharisees as guilty of lying, it follows that Herod had caused some such report to be spread abroad. It is very likely that the Pharisees were not consulting the welfare of Jesus in bringing this report to Him. At that time Jesus was in the dominions of Herod Antipas; and the advice of the Pharisees is that He pass over to Judea.

Jesus gives them a message to carry back to Herod, whom He designates as a fox. The fox has always been considered as the symbol of cunning and deceit. The preaching of Jesus was a constant rebuke to Herod, even as the preaching of St. John had been. He dared not lay hands upon Jesus, for he had experienced the ill-will of the people for the murder of St. John. In his desire to be rid of the presence of Jesus, he makes threats and spreads the report that the Pharisees brought. Jesus declares that He will not interrupt His work out of fear of Herod, neither shall Herod nor the Pharisees be able to disturb Him. He mentions the casting out of devils and curing of disease as benefits bestowed, as signs of the Messianic Work and proof of His power. *Today and tomorrow and the third day* designates a definite time that does not depend upon the favor or disfavor of Herod. A certain time is fixed for Jesus to accomplish His work; and He shall fulfill this time regardless of what Herod may do or say. *I am consummated* refers to the death and glorification of Jesus.

Verse 33 is not a mere repetition of verse 32. Jesus had

day following; because it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. (34) Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent to thee! How often would I have gathered thy children together as the hen doth her brood under her wings, and thou wouldest not!

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referred to His death as something certain. Yet, He *must walk*, i.e., His mission required that, for a certain period, He should go about preaching and working miracles; and this time He will fulfill. He indicates that He will leave the territories of Herod to meet His death *because it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem*. Though some of the prophets were slain elsewhere, most of them met their death in Jerusalem. Custom and precedent had established the city as the place where a prophet should meet his death. When conditions of time and place have been fulfilled, it is not Herod that shall be the murderer.

Foretelling His death and foreseeing the punishment of Jerusalem, Jesus laments over the city. Jerusalem is addressed as one *that killeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent*. She is the slayer of the prophets and of those sent her from God. It is her abiding character; her history has won for her the title of "murderess." Jesus would have saved the city, would have *gathered her children together as the hen doth her brood under her wing*. These words and desire are best restricted to the work of Jesus in Jerusalem. We have again evidence from the first Gospels of much work and preaching of Jesus in Jerusalem. Jesus had labored and desired to save the people of Jerusalem, but they would not believe and accept salvation from Him. *Thou wouldest not* stands in tragic contrast to *I would*.

The punishment is predicted: *Your house shall be left to you desolate*. The house is Jerusalem, the home of the children whom Jesus would have saved. It shall be left to them, for the protection of God shall be withdrawn.

(35) Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate. And I say to you: You shall not see me till the time come when you shall say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

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Left to itself, nothing remains but ruin and destruction. Yet Jesus adds the hope and the warning: *You shall not see me*, i.e., in a spiritual sense, they shall not find in Jesus a Savior and protector, *till the time come when you shall say: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*. We read in the Gospels that Jesus was thus greeted at His last entry into Jerusalem. But He is not speaking of this event, for the words just quoted were repeated after the entry into Jerusalem (Mt. xxiii, 37-39), and Jesus would hardly have declared with this solemnity that He was to enter Jerusalem after a short time. The reference cannot be to the Second Coming, for unbelievers will not greet Jesus with hymns of praise. The sense is that Jerusalem will not find a protector in Jesus until, or unless, she acknowledges Him as the Messiah, as the Blessed One who comes in the name of the Lord.

## Chapter XIV

(1) And it came to pass, when he went into the house of one of the chief men of the Pharisees to eat bread on the sabbath day, that they watched him. (2) And behold, there was before him a certain man that had the dropsy. (3) And Jesus answering, spoke to the lawyers and the Pharisees saying: Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day, or not? (4) But they held their peace. And he, taking him, healed him and sent him away. (5) And answering them, he said:

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### *Cure of the Dropsical Man. XIV, 1-6*

On a sabbath day, Jesus sat at table in the house of a Pharisee. The host is designated as *one of the chief men of the Pharisees*. We know not whether the Pharisees had any official rulers; but there were naturally leaders who possessed some dignity and influence over the others. While in the home of this prominent Pharisee, they *watched Him* in order to find fault in His words and actions.

In the same house there was a man suffering from dropsy. It is conjectured that the man was introduced into the house for the purpose of seeing whether or not Jesus would cure him on the sabbath day; but it may be that he entered with the intention of obtaining a cure. He stands before Jesus, uttering not a word. Jesus will cure him; but first He asks the lawyers and Pharisees if it be lawful to cure on the sabbath. But they remained silent, though it was their duty, as professed expounders of the Law, to give an answer. Jesus takes the sick man, cures him and sends him away.

Jesus shows what He has done is lawful. Again, as in

Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fall into a pit and will not immediately draw him out on the sabbath day?

(6) And they could not answer him to these things.

(7) And he spoke a parable also to them that were invited, marking how they were choosing the first places, saying to them: (8) When thou art invited by any man to a wedding feast, sit not down in the first place lest perhaps one more honorable than thou be invited by him, (9) and he that invited thee and him come and say to thee: Give this man

the cure of the infirm woman, Jesus draws an argument from their own traditions and practices. They would draw an animal from the pit on the sabbath, even though the act entailed much labor. Then they should also admit that a work of mercy towards a human being did not constitute a violation of the Law.

#### *The Last Place at Table. XIV, 7-11*

This is the first of a series of three parables spoken by Jesus in the house of the Pharisee. Most likely the cure of the sick man preceded the meal. As the guests took their places at table there was much manuevering among them to obtain the best places. In answer, as it were, to this seeking after the first place, Jesus speaks the parable. It is called a parable in the wide sense; for it consists in an exhortation rather than in a narrative; a parable, however, because it is to be understood metaphorically and does contain a narrative.

Jesus speaks of being invited to a wedding, because such occasions were accompanied by greater formality, and perhaps to render the rebuke less personal. When invited, they should not immediately take the first place at table; for one more honorable may arrive, for whom the first place has been reserved. Covered with shame, they will have to

place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest place. (10) But when thou art invited, go, sit down in the lowest place, that when he who invited thee cometh, he may say to thee: Friend, come up higher. Then shalt thou have glory before them that sit at table with thee. (11) For every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.

(12) And he said also to him that invited him: When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kinsmen, nor rich neighbors; lest they

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take the last place (the only one left vacant, because all have sought to obtain as high a place as possible). Rather they should take the last place, so that the host may invite them to come up higher; and they shall thus be honored.

The meaning and the application is given: *Everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* This is the rule of divine judgment, but does not always hold good in man's dealing with his fellow man. It is the fundamental law of the Kingdom of God (cf. Lk. i, 52; Gal. vi, 3; Jas. iv, 10).

#### *The Poor Guests. XIV, 12-14*

It is pleasant to entertain one's friends, seemly to entertain one's relatives, advantageous to entertain rich neighbors. But there are, and must be, more worthy motives for extending hospitality (cf. Lk. vi, 33; Mt. v, 46). It is not good to act from mere selfish or utilitarian motives. This is the lesson of the present parable.

Jesus admonishes His host that, when he makes a dinner or a supper, he should not call in his friends, kinsmen or rich neighbors. Jesus does not discourage loyalty or hospitality to one's friends and relatives; but wishes to teach kindness and charity towards all. It is not forbidden to entertain such persons, as if it were sinful to do so, for Jesus adds: *Lest*

also invite thee again and a recompense be made to thee. (13) But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; (14) and thou shalt be blessed, because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense; for recompense shall be made thee in the resurrection of the just.

(15) When one of them that sat at table with him heard these things, he said to him: Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God. (16) But he said to him:

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*they also invite thee again, and recompense be made to thee.* They will receive a return in this world (for which perhaps they seek; and which was the only motive for showing hospitality towards those mentioned). On the contrary, He advises to call in the poor and the needy, for these have no means of repaying the good deed. One will ordinarily invite them from higher motives, and then *recompense shall be made at the resurrection of the just*. Evidently the admonition not to invite the one class and to invite the other is given from the spiritual and supernatural viewpoint. The form of the parable emphasizes the acting from higher and supernatural motives, so that one may obtain a reward in the next life.

#### *The Great Supper. XIV, 15-24*

The words of Jesus regarding the reward in the next life caused one of the guests to exclaim that he was blessed who should *eat bread in the Kingdom of God*. There is nothing extraordinary, good or bad, in this exclamation. The comparison of the blessings of the Messianic Kingdom and the happiness of Heaven to a great feast was common among the Jews; the comparison had the support of the Old Testament, being found in both the Prophecies and in the Psalms; and the comparison was also used by Jesus. Jesus replies

A certain man made a great supper and invited many. (17) And he sent his servant at the hour of supper to say to them that were invited: Come, for now all things are ready. (18) And they all began at once to make excuse. The first said to him: I have bought a farm and I must

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to the exclamation with the parable of the Great Supper. A similar parable, with the same general argument and lesson, is found in Mt. xxii, 1-14. But it is a mistake to consider them as the same, for they differ too much in circumstances and detail. We give the parable and its first meaning at one and the same time.

The first part of the image represents a man who made a great supper and invited many. The *certain man* represents God, who has prepared a *supper*, the Messianic Kingdom. It is a *great supper* because of the fulness of grace and spiritual delights offered therein. In ancient days there existed the custom of sending two invitations to a feast, and this custom still exists among the Arabs. The first invitation was sent some days previous to the feast, the second was sent when the feast was prepared. The Romans called the man who brought the second invitation the *vocator*. There is reference to this custom in the present parable. Many had been invited to the supper; and a servant is now sent to those who were invited to notify them that the supper was ready and that they should come. *Many were invited* during the past through the Patriarchs and Prophets by whom the Chosen People were prepared for the coming of the Messiah and for the Kingdom. *The hour of the supper* is the time when the Kingdom of the Messiah is being prepared, or is present and established. *The servant* who is now sent is Jesus and those united with Him in calling men into the Kingdom of God.

The second stage of the narrative represents those invited making excuses. Three examples of their excuses are given.



needs go out and see it; I pray thee hold me excused. (19) And another said: I have bought five yoke of oxen and I go to try them; I pray thee hold me excused. (20) And another said: I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. (21) And the servant returning, told these things to his lord. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant: Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the

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One had bought a farm and pleads that he must go and see it, though such an excuse was not valid. Another had bought five yoke of oxen and, pretending no necessity, states that he desires to try the oxen. The third gives as his excuse the fact that he has taken a wife. The three excuses are generally considered as indicating three vices which keep men from the Kingdom of God: pride, inordinate attachment to the things of the world, unregulated indulgence of self. Many call attention to the fact that none of these three men were engaged in anything unlawful in itself, but unlawful due to circumstances. A man may become so absorbed and implicated in human affairs that he turns a deaf ear to the voice of God and neglects his salvation. Under such circumstances his course becomes sinful. They are those who, in the parable of the sower, are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this world.

The master will not forego the feast because those invited refused to come. He sends the servant into the *streets and lanes of the city* to bring in the poor and the feeble. These men, who are to take the place of those first invited, belong to the same city as the host and the invited guests. They represent the lower classes of the people, in distinction to the scribes and Pharisees. The invitation and final call are represented as coming first to the leaders of the people because they should have been the first to enter the Kingdom of the Messiah; for they were supposed to have greater

maimed, and the blind, and the lame. (22) And the servant said: Lord, what thou hast commanded is done; but yet there is room. (23) And the lord said to the servant: Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. (24) For I say to you that none of those men that were invited shall taste of my supper.

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knowledge and to be able the sooner to recognize the truth, and thus lead those under them. Their pride and worldliness kept them from entering the Kingdom of God; but the poor and the lowly entered and came to the knowledge of the truth (cf. Lk. x, 21).

There is still room at the feast. The master thereupon commands the servant to *go out into the highways and hedges*, i.e., outside the city, and bring in the strangers, the Gentiles. Jesus did not, during His life on earth, personally call the Gentiles; but He wrought the Work of Redemption for all men and sent the apostles to call them into the Church. Hence, the same servant calls the strangers in the parable, for Jesus calls them through the apostles whom He sent in His name and with His authority. *Compel them to come in* cannot mean the use of physical force by the servant; rather it designates the use of every argument and inducement to prevail upon the strangers to come. So also in the application. It represents the great desire of the Lord to communicate His gifts and happiness to others, the power and efficacy of the Word of God, the diligence and zeal to be displayed by him who carries the message of Jesus to the world. An exhortation to this zeal and moral suasion is given in II Tim. iv, 1-2.

#### *The Following of Christ. XIV, 25-35*

In this discourse Jesus speaks of various conditions required in those who wish to be His disciples. The occasion

(25) Now there went a great multitude with him. And turning, he said to them: (26) If any man come after me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethern, and sisters, yea and his life also, he cannot be my disciple. (27) Whosoever doth not carry his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. (28) For which

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for the discourse was when great multitudes went with Him on the way to Jerusalem. From this physical following, Jesus takes occasion to speak of following Him spiritually as His disciple.

The first condition is expressed by a strong figure. If a man would be a disciple of Christ, he must hate his parents and nearest relatives and even his own life. The words of Jesus do not mean that a man must actually hate those who are united to him by the closest ties of relationship, for He commands us to love all men, even our enemies. *Hate* is often used in the Scriptures to express lesser love (cf. Lk. xii, 51-53; Mt. x, 37). Here it is supposed that the circumstance arises when there is a question between loyalty to Christ and human affections. These latter must never be allowed to stand between man and God, between the disciple and the Master. Since a choice must be made, the one neglected and not chosen is said to be *hated*, i.e., loved less. No one and no thing, not even one's life, may be preferred to Christ; all must be sacrificed for His sake and for the sake of virtue. One not ready to make such a sacrifice of all things for the sake of Christ, cannot be His disciple.

A second requirement in the disciple of Christ is that he must take up his cross and follow Jesus (cf. Lk. ix, 23; Mt. x, 38). This principle is frequently insisted upon by the Lord. He who would be His disciple must be ready to meet dangers, difficulties and trials; he must be ready to carry the cross, to practice self-denial. Therefore, the disciple of Christ must be so disposed that neither the love

of you having a mind to build a tower, doth not first sit down and reckon the necessary cost, whether he have wherewith to finish it; (29) lest, after he hath laid the foundation, not being able to finish, all that see begin to mock him, saying: (30) This man began to build and was not able to finish. (31) Or, what king going to war against another king doth not first sit down and take counsel whether he is able, with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? (32) Or else, while the other is yet afar off, sending an embassy, he desireth conditions

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of relatives nor the fear of enemies and temporal loss will be able to separate him from the Master. There is need of courage, constancy and firmness of purpose, which is taught by the two examples which follow.

**THE BUILDER** (28-30). If a man desires to build a tower, or an edifice of any kind, he first gives consideration to the requirements and his own means. He will not begin to build until he is reasonably certain that he can bring the work to completion; otherwise he becomes the object of derision. In the same manner, he who begins to follow Christ and does not continue to do so, for reason presented in the preceding, becomes an object of derision to the enemies of Christ.

**THE WARRIOR** (31-32). If a king contemplates making war, he will first take into account his own and his enemy's strength. In case he realizes that he cannot wage a successful war, he sues for peace. In this example the interests at stake are greater than in the preceding and the loss entailed is more serious.

Verse 33 gives the lesson to be drawn from these two examples: *So likewise everyone of you that doth not renounce all that he hath, cannot be my disciple.* This seems to present a difficulty, as not following from the two examples. We must here find the term of comparison and

of peace. (33) So also every one of you that doth not renounce all that he hath cannot be my disciples. (34) Salt is good. But even if the salt lose its savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is fit neither for the land nor for the dunghill; men shall cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

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apply the examples accordingly. The two examples have the same purpose and illustrate the same lesson; and therefore the point of comparison must be the same in both. Common to both are: a work to be undertaken, need of considering the requirements for this work, loss if the work is not brought to completion. From the context we learn that the work to be performed is the following of Christ, and that the requirements are the sacrifice of all natural affections in so far as they may hinder this work, fortitude and self-denial. The lesson then is: Give careful consideration to these requirements and be ready to fulfil them; be courageous and constant in following Christ, lest you suffer great loss and become the object of derision.

THE SALT (34-35). This example, or parable, shows the loss incurred if one does not persevere in following Christ. Everyone will admit that salt is good. But if the salt become insipid and lose its savor, there is nothing that can make it useful. It is doubted by some whether salt can lose its savor, or saltiness; even then the sentence stands. For should it be possible that salt lose its savor, then it is impossible to restore it and it is of no value to man. So also the Christian who *loses his savor*, who falls away from Christ, is as useless as the salt should it lose its savor. However, man may be restored through the grace of God. The example does not take this into consideration, but merely contemplates the utter uselessness of a disciple who is without grace and zeal.

## Chapter XV

(1) Now all the publicans and sinners were drawing nigh unto him to hear him. (2) And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying: This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them. (3) And he spoke to them this parable, saying:

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### *The Parables of Mercy*

The fifteenth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel is one of the most beautiful and consoling chapters in the Sacred Scripture and is often called "The Chapter of Mercy." In it are recorded three of our Lord's most exquisite and eloquent parables, describing the mercy of God towards sinners. In the first two, the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, is illustrated how God seeks after the sinner and brings him back to the fold; in the third, the Prodigal Son, is illustrated the sinner's activity in the work of conversion.

The occasion and circumstances which moved Jesus to speak these parables are given in the first two verses of the chapter. We read that the publicans and sinners flocked to Jesus. They were the outcasts of the people, despised and contemned by the scribes and Pharisees who excluded them from all hope of salvation. Great numbers of them came to Jesus and heard Him gladly, seeking salvation. The scribes and Pharisees murmured against Jesus, saying: *This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them* (cf. Lk. v, 30). They bore it ill that Jesus showed kindness towards sinners; they were scandalized because He did not drive them from Him. Because of this murmuring Jesus speaks the three parables that follow.

- (4) What man of you, having a hundred sheep and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after that which was lost till he find it?  
 (5) And when he hath found it, lay it upon his shoulders,
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*The Lost Sheep.* XV, 4-7

Cf. Mt. xviii, 12-14, where the parable of the Lost Sheep is used to teach that the "little ones" are precious in the sight of Jesus who came to save them. There is no doubt but that Jesus frequently chose figures and images from pastoral life in order to illustrate His doctrine; and He spoke this parable on two different occasions. In the present instant the parable teaches the mercy of God and His pleasure at the conversion of sinners.

Jesus gives the parable in question form, asking what man among His hearers, having a flock of a hundred sheep, will not seek after one that has gone astray? The question and its personal form is not without reason. The Pharisees had murmured because Jesus sought men who had gone astray from God, yet they would seek after a sheep that had strayed away from the fold. The question states a fact and not a doubt. There is nothing particular about the number *one hundred*, except it be used to form a contrast; even if but one of a hundred goes astray, the shepherd will seek it. The one lost sheep is the central figure in the parable and only what is said of it need be applied. The ninety-nine do not enter into the application of the parable. These are left in *the desert*, a place apart from the habitation of men, the usual pasture for sheep. He does not leave them exposed to danger while he seeks the lost sheep, for such a course would be foolhardy. Besides, other shepherds may be in the same pastures with their flocks. The shepherd does not rest content with the fact that he has ninety-nine sheep; his whole attention is centered upon the one that has gone astray.

rejoicing; (6) and coming home, call together his friends and neighbors, saying to them: Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost? (7) I say to you: Even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that doth penance, more than over ninety-nine just that need not penance.

(8) Or what woman having ten drachmas, if she lose one

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When the shepherd finds the sheep, he does not punish it, does not complain of the trouble it has caused him, does not drive it back to the fold. He rejoices and takes the sheep upon his shoulders. He has found what was lost; and it is only of this that he thinks. His joy is so great that he calls upon his friends and neighbors to join him in rejoicing over the finding of the lost sheep. The Pharisees are answered. If they rejoice at the finding of a sheep that has gone astray, they surely ought not murmur when men are brought back to God. Further, the parable teaches the love with which God follows after the sinner, seeking and bringing him back through His grace. The return of the sinners gives joy to God and His friends.

The lesson is emphasized: *There shall be joy in Heaven over one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just that need not penance.* This verse presents a difficulty. It does not seem correct to make the *ninety-nine just* an ironical allusion to the Pharisees; for then very little, if anything, is said of the joy in Heaven over the conversion of a sinner, except the comparison be taken as a negation to the effect that the Pharisees do not cause Heaven to rejoice. But we may take the term "just" in the strict sense. Then, Jesus speaks in a human way, and emphasizes the fact that the conversion of the sinner is a source of rejoicing in Heaven. A father will make a greater demonstration of joy over the recovery of a sick son than he will because his other sons have remained in good health, though



drachma, doth not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she find it? (9) And when she hath found it, call together her friends and neighbors, saying: Rejoice with me, because I have found the drachma that I had lost? (10) So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God over one sinner doing penance.

(11) And he said: A certain man had two sons. (12) And

he loves all in the same degree. There is a special cause for joy not found in the others.

### *The Lost Coin.* XV, 8-10

This parable is an alternative, or counterpart, of the preceding parable. It is meant to serve the same purpose and teach the same lesson. The main points of difference are the change from a *man* to a *woman* and from a *sheep* to a *coin*. As the errant sheep is an image of the sinner straying away from God; so also is the coin an image of a soul lost from the treasury of God.

Though the *drachma*, a silver coin of nearly the same value as a Roman *denarius*, was small in value it represented a great loss to the woman. She lights a lamp, since Oriental houses generally have no windows and a lamp would be necessary for a search even in the day. The sweeping of the house indicates the minute and careful search after the lost coin. When she has found the coin she too calls together her neighbors and friends to rejoice with her.

Again the lesson is added that there is joy in Heaven upon one sinner doing penance. The comparison is tacitly made: The angels rejoice, the Pharisees murmur. The two parables show that the work of Jesus in receiving and converting sinners is highly pleasing to God and that every true friend of God will rejoice when sinners are brought back to the way of virtue.

the younger of them said to his father: Father, give me the portion of the substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his substance. (13) And not many days after, the younger son, gathering all together, went abroad into a far country; and there wasted his substance, living riot-

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*The Prodigal Son.* XV, 11-32

This parable teaches the same lesson as the two preceding; it has the same aim and purpose. But we may note some differences. In the first two parables is described the care of God in seeking after the sinner — prevenient grace; the objects sought, a sheep and a coin, were such that they could not be restored by themselves. So neither can the sinner be restored to grace without the help of God. In the present parable is set forth the nature of repentance and the great love and mercy with which God receives the returning sinner. The first two illustrate the grace of God, this parable illustrates the sinner co-operating with the grace of God. The first two speak of the joy in Heaven, the present teaches more explicitly that the just are not to murmur because of the graces granted to sinners.

The parable may be divided into three parts: The Departure of the Younger Son (11-16); His Repentance and Return (17-24); The Complaints of the Elder Son (25-32). In the interpretation of this parable, so rich in descriptive detail, we should remember that many of these details may be merely ornamental, added to emphasize and make more vivid the various scenes portrayed; and that there is no necessity of finding an application for each individual detail. The purpose of the parable and the point of comparison must be kept in mind, and the details applied accordingly. There is much discussion and disagreement as to whom the elder son represents; but we leave the application to the end of the explanation. At present, we consider the younger son as one who has strayed away from the Father's House, a sinner, as is indeed required by the narrative itself.

**DEPARTURE OF THE YOUNGER SON (11-16).** Jesus represents a certain man who had two sons. From the various occasions on which he is mentioned in the parable we learn that he was rich, and a kind and loving father.

ously. (14) And after he had spent all, there came a mighty famine in that country, and he began to be in want. (15) And he went and hired himself to one of the citizens of that country. And he sent him to his farm to feed swine. (16) And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. (17) But

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The younger son requests that the father give him the *portion of substance*, i.e., what he would receive at his father's death. According to the law of inheritance, the firstborn son received a double share of the property left by the father; according to custom, the firstborn usually received his share in immovable property, the others receiving their shares in money and movable goods. For this reason it is the *younger son* who asks the father to make a premature division of the property. There was no obligation on the part of the father to make such a division; at times the father abdicated because of failing powers or divided his property to allow a son to marry or enter business for himself. The father accedes to the wishes of the son; *he divided unto them his substance*. As the younger son received his share, what remained would fall to the elder son.

Having received his portion, the younger son gathered together all that he had and went *abroad into a far country*, having the intention of breaking off completely with his father and family. In the far country he spends and wastes his substance by living in a godless and licentious manner. There came a great famine in that country and he began to be in want. He has no thought of returning to his father; rather he seeks to support himself. He enters into the service of one of the citizens who sends him to his farm to feed the swine, an occupation considered as the most abject and debasing by the hearers of Jesus. His misery does not end here; he feels the pangs of hunger and would have satisfied himself with the *husks the swine did eat*. These

were the fruit of the carob-tree, used as food by the poorer classes and also for animals. But this food is not given him; the swine are better provided for than he.

The application of this part of the parable is variously made. Keeping in mind the rules for the interpretation of parables, the following seems the best. The *younger son* is made the one to leave his father because such action was more natural and more easily understood in his case; and, therefore, there is no need for seeking some hidden meaning in *younger* as opposed to *elder*. The division of the property shows that God has given freedom to man; and the departure of the younger son typifies the departure of man from God, man who desires his own freedom as against the Law of God. The *far country* does not signify local departure, but designates forgetfulness of God, separation from God. The sinner wastes *his substance*, the gifts and favors of God which he abuses, the natural and supernatural faculties with which he was endowed. He finds only a passing pleasure in sin, his desire is never satisfied and he goes from sin to sin. He is *in want*, a real spiritual want that cannot be satisfied and he sinks lower and lower. The final state of the younger son typifies a man in sin. There was no greater misfortune, no greater disgrace in the natural order, than a rich man sunk to poverty and want, forced to tend swine which fare better than he. It is perhaps best not to apply each individual detail. The entire picture of the young man illustrates the state of the sinner (not one particular kind of sinner; but all sinners in general). There is illustrated the unhappiness, the affliction and bitterness that follows a course of sin; the loss of the grace and friendship of God; the discontent and disgusting slavery of the passions. All this is portrayed by the once free, honored, prosperous young man who departed from his father.

HIS REPENTANCE AND RETURN (17-24). Misery and want opened the eyes of the young man to the folly of

when he returned unto himself, he said: How many hired servants of my father abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger. (18) I will rise and go to my father, and say to him: Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee; (19) I am no longer worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. (20) And rising up, he came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him and was moved to compassion; and running to him, he fell upon his neck and kissed him.

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his action. He thinks of the father's house, where even the servants are well cared for. He contrasts his present state with his former condition, his present state with that of the servants: They are filled, while he perishes of hunger. Recalling the goodness of his father, he resolves to return and make a confession of his guilt. *I have sinned against Heaven and before thee.* By his evil life he has sinned against God; by leaving his home he has committed an offense against his father. He is ready to acknowledge his guilt; and with this consciousness of guilt is united humility. *I am no longer worthy to be called thy son;* having forfeited his rights and privileges, he no longer considers himself worthy to be restored to his former state. *Make me as one of thy hired servants,* which is a favor to him.

He immediately carries out his resolution; but while he was yet afar off, his father sees him coming and is moved with pity towards him. The father hastens to meet him, embraces him tenderly and shows a readiness to receive him back into his house. The young man begins his confession, but does not complete it, either because the father interrupted him or because he sees that there is no need of making a request. The father restores him to his former state. The servants are commanded to clothe him in the *best robe* and to *put a ring* on his finger, which were tokens and signs of favor and nobility; and the *shoes* given him are a warrant

(21) And the son said to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee; I am no longer worthy to be called thy son. (22) But the father said to the servants: Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; (23) and bring the fatted calf and kill it; and let us eat and make merry; (24) because this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to make merry.

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that he is not received as a servant but as a son. The father is not yet satisfied, others must share in his joy. He orders a feast to be prepared *because this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found*. The two members of the sentence are parallel; "was dead" and "was lost" have the same meaning, as also "come to life" and "is found." The sense is: He has been absent for so long a time and has suffered so much that he is like one risen from the dead. Servitude, sorrow, exile were looked upon as equivalent to death (cf. Osee vi, 3).

This part of the parable illustrates the repentance of a sinner, its conditions and acceptance by God. Through misfortune, through a realization of the depths into which he has fallen, the grace of God calls the sinner to repentance. The first step on the way to conversion is the acknowledgment of sin and sorrow because of the offense committed against the Heavenly Father. This sorrow is accompanied by humility and hope. The sinner also says: I will return to my Father's House. And the Father receives him with love and kindness. The reception of the prodigal son is described with a great wealth of detail, for herein lies the tendency of the parable. Jesus thus makes the return vivid and impressive to remove all doubt that the son was not restored to his former state. Whether each individual detail in the reception of the son is to be applied to the repentant sinner is difficult to say. As the parable describes full

(25) Now his elder brother was in the field; and when he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard the music and dancing. (26) And he called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. (27) And he said to him: Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe. (28) But he was angry and would not go in. His father therefore came out and entreated him. (29) And he answering, said to his father:

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restoration, the lesson is: The sinner who truly repents is restored completely to the grace and favor of God; all that he lost through sin is restored and his past iniquities are no longer remembered (cf. Ez. xviii, 21-22). The robe, ring and shoes exemplify the granting of grace and the friendship of God, pledges that the sinner is received as a son; and the feast illustrates the pleasure of God at the conversion of a sinner and the joy that should be manifested in the household of God.

COMPLAINT OF THE ELDER SON (25-32). When the younger son returned the elder son was *in the field*, engaged in labor, doing his duty. He did not know that his brother had returned and that a feast was in progress. To blame the elder son for not being present in the house when his brother returned is out of place and in no way warranted by the narrative. He learns of his brother's return and of the feast when he comes in from his work. He is filled with anger and refuses to take part in the feast to honor his brother.

To the entreaties of his father that he take part in the feast, he complains of unjust discrimination. His statement of fact must be taken as true; for the father tacitly approves it, and had it not been true he would not have given the reply as stated in the parable. The elder son declares that he has always been a dutiful son: *For so many years do I serve thee, and I have never transgressed thy command-*

Behold, for so many years do I serve thee and have never transgressed thy commandment; and yet, thou hast never given me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. (30) But as soon as this thy son is come, who hath devoured thy substance with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. (31) But he said to him: Son, thou art always with me, and all that I have is thine. (32) But it was fitting that we should make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.

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*ment.* Yet, he complains, his father has never prepared a feast for him. But now, as soon as *this thy son* (he does not call him "my brother") has returned, a great feast is made and all are called upon to rejoice. To this petulant complaint, the father replies by stating that the elder son has not been injured: *Son, thou art always with me, and all that I have is thine.* The inheritance he was to receive as firstborn had not been touched, neither was his father's love towards him in any way diminished. But the erring brother (note *this thy brother* in opposition to *this thy son*) who has returned repentant and reformed should be made to realize that the father's love for him is unchanged. It is wrong for the elder brother to murmur and complain; he should rather rejoice at the return of his brother.

The application of the two brothers is now an easy matter. The younger cannot be the Gentiles as such, for they were never in the Father's House together with the elder brother who would, in this case, represent the Jews. The elder brother cannot represent the Pharisees, for neither the statement of the son nor the reply of the father would be verified, and these are essential parts of the parable. Hence, the younger son represents the sinner, who has departed from God and returned to Him; and the elder son represents the truly just man who has remained faithful to God. How then explain his murmuring? Maldonatus says: "If the



just would complain against the mercy of God, He could answer as the father does in the parable." Not only might the just man complain, but at times he does, especially if a repentant sinner receives a great favor from God. His murmuring is wrong; for no injustice is done him and his relation to God is not altered because God receives sinners. The sinner is the brother of the just man; and the latter should consider this relation and rejoice at the conversion. This part of the parable and the application we have given is not contrary to the trend of the parable. It rather emphasizes the refutation of the murmuring Pharisees, by teaching that not even holy men, who are conscious of no violation of God's Law, may murmur. It serves further to emphasize the mercy of God and to teach the just that they are not to treat the repentant sinner harshly or with contempt.

## Chapter XVI

(1) And he said to his disciples: There was a certain rich man who had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he was wasting his goods. (2) And he called him and said to him: What is this that I hear of thee? Give

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### *The Unjust Steward.* XVI, 1-13

The various and conflicting opinions and interpretations given this parable through the centuries (cf. Fonck, the Parables of the Gospel, p. 592 ff.), show that it is one of the most difficult and most easily misunderstood of the parables. If, however, the nature of parables and the rules for their interpretation be kept in mind, little difficulty will be found. Attention may be immediately called to the following: (a) The whole image is to be applied to the whole truth and not single parts to single parts, for parables are not allegories; (b) The image must be applied to the truth illustrated according to the *tertium comparationis*, which must remain the same throughout the parable; (c) The nature of parables demands that individual details of the image be applied only according to the image itself, the truth illustrated and the point of comparison.

The image, or figure, chosen is that of a steward dismissed because of dishonesty. The circumstance of his dismissal and the wording of the text demand that this steward practiced dishonesty against his lord and not against anyone else (which is overlooked by some interpreters). The accusers of the steward and the spirit in which they made the accusation have no further bearing on the narrative and do not enter into the application of the parable. We are not told the nature of his injustice except that he had appro-

the account of thy stewardship, for now thou canst be steward no longer. (3) And the steward said within himself: What shall I do, because my lord taketh away from me the stewardship? To dig I am not able; to beg I am ashamed. (4) I know what I will do that when I shall be removed from the stewardship they may receive me into their houses. (5) And calling together every one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first: How much dost thou owe my lord? (6) But he said: A hundred barrels of oil. And he said to him: Take thy bill and sit down quickly and write fifty. (7) Then he said to another: How much dost

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priated his lord's goods to himself and squandered them. The accusation of dishonesty is proven true; the steward is not called upon to make a defense. Judgment is already passed and he is required to surrender his office. *Give the account of thy stewardship* means that he is to hand over the various books, bonds, leases, documents which he has in his possession; and these accounts are required for transferring his office to another. The words of the master: *Thou canst be steward no longer*, show that his guilt is established and his dismissal decided; that he is not called to judgment.

The steward is in a quandary; he has nothing to fall back upon. He is not accustomed to labor and he is ashamed to ask for alms. He hits upon a plan by which to obtain friends who will aid him in the time of need. His office and the various accounts, not yet taken from him, afford him the opportunity of carrying out his plan. He calls together every one of his lord's debtors, most probably one at a time. Two examples of his method are given. One owes the lord 100 *barrels of oil*, i.e., according to the Greek 100 *Bath*, equivalent to 700 gallons. The steward tells him to change the figure to 50. Another owes 100 *quarters of wheat*, i.e., 100 *Kor*, or 800 bushels. The steward com-

thou owe? Who said: A hundred quarters of wheat. He said to him: Take thy bill and write eighty. (8) And his lord commended the unjust steward, forasmuch as he had done wisely. For children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. (9) And I say to you:

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mands him to make his bill read 80. The exact form of the *bills* and the nature of the fraud are not clear. However, this much is certain regarding the transaction: The bills, according to the custom of the time, were made out in duplicate form, one held by the debtor and the other by the steward; both copies were changed, for otherwise the fraud would have been detected and the steward would not have obtained his purpose. The *debtors* are such in the strict sense; and the change in their bills meant a lowering of the debt they owed the master of the steward. The result of the transaction was that the debtors, having their debts lowered through this unjust action, will come to the aid of the steward when he loses his position. The action of the steward is an entirely new transaction, and not a continuation of past acts of injustice.

The lord of the steward discovered that he had been defrauded; but since all the documents were changed, he could not recover the amount of which he was defrauded. The steward had secured his future; and therefore *the lord commended the unjust steward, forasmuch as he had done wisely*. This sentence, which causes most of the difficulty and has led to many curious interpretations of the parable, is still a part of the parable. It is not a remark by St. Luke to the effect that Jesus bestowed praise upon the steward, but it contains the words of Jesus, declaring what the lord of the steward did. This is clear from the opening words of verse 9: "And I say to you." Had St. Luke closed the quotation of our Lord's words with verse 7 and made a remark of his own in verse 8, he could not start verse 9 as he

does. For this verse continues the words of Jesus and does not begin a new discourse. The lord of the steward does not praise him because of the act as such, but commends him in so far as he had done *wisely*, i.e., shrewdly adopted the means to provide for his future. It is the commendation which one man of the world may pay to another, even though he suffers through the act. There is here no statement on the morality of the act, neither by the lord of the steward nor by Jesus. Jesus gives an example of what might, and does, happen in daily life; and in giving the example, He passes no judgment on the characters or their acts.

The *tertium comparationis*, the lesson intended and the clue to the interpretation of the parable, is contained in the last clause of verse 8: *The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light*. The children of this world are the worldlings, who are wholly intent upon worldly interests and pleasures; the children of light are those who belong to the Kingdom of God, whom God has called to the light of grace and truth. These two classes are compared in their respective spheres, "in their generation." This restricts the comparison to disposing of all things to the end they have in view. The parable is intended to show how worldlings take every means to promote their temporal interests. Hence: The people of the world display greater wisdom, prudence and foresight in providing for their future in this world than the children of light show in providing for their future in the world to come. The lesson is a complaint because of the lack of zeal on the part of the children of light and an exhortation to greater wisdom and prudence.

It is most probable that not a single character nor a single act in the parable is to be applied to the truth illustrated. The steward is praised, not because of his injustice as such but because he provided for his future. There is no comparison made between the children of

Make unto yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity; that when it shall fail, they may receive you into eternal dwellings. (10) He that is faithful in that which is little, is faithful in that which is great; and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is great. (11) If

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this world and the children of light except in so far as prudent foresight and zeal is concerned, each in his own sphere. The comparison is made by way of dissimilarity. Neither the steward's actions nor his method are held up for imitation; but those who seek the things of eternal life should show prudence and zeal in the use of every means to advance their eternal interests.

Jesus adds certain lessons to the parable. He advises His hearers to make friends of the Mammon of iniquity. *Mammon* is derived from the Aramaic and means "riches"; and these are called of *iniquity* because of their tendency to lead to sin. Jesus would have His followers make friends of this world, not for the sake of this world, but *that when it shall fail, they may receive you into eternal dwellings*. By an unjust use of the things of the world, the steward gained a home for a time; by a just use of the things of this world, the Christian should provide an everlasting dwelling for himself in the next world. We are not told how to make friends of the Mammon of iniquity; in a general way, we are to do so by using them according to the will of God, in not seeking them for their own sake. Or, by the proper use of the goods of this world through alms-giving, man makes friends for himself; and these friends will be an aid to life eternal.

Jesus continues that he who is faithful in that which is little, is faithful in that which is great; and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust in that which is great. The *little*, by reason of the context, means the things of this world; and the *great* are the goods of the spiritual life. He that faithfully and justly discharges temporal affairs will

then you have not been faithful in the unjust mammon, who will trust you with that which is true? (12) And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will trust you with that which is your own? (13) No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

(14) Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard these things; and they derided him. (15) And he said to

do likewise in spiritual matters. This is borne out by verses 11 and 12. If one has not administered the goods of this world justly, according to the will of God, no one will trust him with *that which is true*, i.e., true riches, spiritual gifts (cf. Lk. vi, 19-20). And if one who has not been faithful in *that which is another's*, i.e., the goods of this world, of which man is only the administrator, no one will trust him with *that which is your own*, i.e., spiritual goods, destined for man as his own and abiding possession.

The great principal is given in verse 13: *No servant can serve two masters*. No one can give his entire and undivided service to two masters, especially if these two masters are opposed to each other and give contradictory commands. Where the interests and commands of the two masters are opposed to each other, the inevitable result is that the servant will *hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other*. He cannot fulfil the commands of both masters; he will neglect and despise the one while he holds with the other and does his will. Such being the case, *you cannot serve God and Mammon*. The service of God and the service of the world, here personified by Mammon, are opposed to each other; and therefore no man can be wholly at the service of God and of Mammon. Double allegiance is impossible.

them: You are they who justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is exalted to men is an abomination in the sight of God. (16) The Law and the Prophets were until John; from that time the Kingdom of God is preached and every one useth violence towards it.

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*Reproof of the Pharisees. XVI, 14-18*

Certain Pharisees heard our Lord's discourse on the right use of the things of this world and His declaration that no man could serve both God and Mammon. They were lovers of money; and the words of Jesus were not to their liking. *They derided Him*, by some sign giving expression to their displeasure.

Jesus replies: *You are they who justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts.* The Pharisees exhibited themselves as just and succeeded in forming the judgment of the people to this effect. But God knew their hearts, knew whether or not they were truly just and pious. Jesus does not condemn the entire class of Pharisees, but merely states that God's judgment of them is right in all cases while the judgment of men may be wrong. *That which is exalted to men*, from the context, either riches or the Pharisees themselves, *is an abomination in the sight of God.*

The discourse has been condensed by St. Luke so that the connecting links are difficult to establish. The connection between verse 15 and 16 seems to be the following: While the Pharisees seem to be just, they are in reality opposed to true justice. *The Law and the Prophets* is the usual designation for the Old Testament, which was in force until John the Baptist preached. From that time the Kingdom of God was and is being preached. The Old was a preparation for the New Law; and those who kept the Law and believed in the Prophets, entered into the New Law and believed in Jesus (cf. Jo. v, 46). The Pharisees did not fulfil the Old



(17) But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the Law to fall. (18) Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.

(19) There was a certain rich man; and he was clothed

Law and they opposed the New; they *used violence towards it*, as in the present instance.

Jesus was not opposed to the Law; rather He upheld its moral obligations, declaring that it is easier for Heaven and earth to pass away than for the smallest part of the Law to be without authority. The *tittle* was a small horn or minute projection by which Hebrew letters, otherwise similar, were distinguished from one another; it is used as a symbol of that which is very small. Heaven and earth shall not pass away, at least not by the power of man (cf. II Pt. iii, 13). Therefore, no human authority or power can take away or make void the least precept of the Divine Law. The moral elements of the Law are indestructible, and the Gospel strengthens them by giving them a new sanction.

Jesus gives an example of the durability of the moral law in spite of the evasions of men. He restores the primitive sanctity of marriage: *Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.* The marriage bond, in its primitive institution, was indissoluble (cf. Gen. ii, 24). The Prophets frequently admonished fidelity to the marriage bond and condemned divorce. Dt. xxiv, 1 made an exception to the Law and permitted divorce. This exception to the Law is now removed. Jesus condemns the practice of the Pharisees who easily permitted divorce; and He declares that those who re-marry after being divorced and those who marry one who has been divorced live in sin and adultery.

in purple and fine linen; and he feasted sumptuously every day. (20) And a certain begger, named Lazarus, was placed at his gate, full of sores, (21) and desiring to be filled with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Yea more, the dogs came and licked his sores. (22) And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by angels into the bosom of Abraham. And the rich man also died and

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*The Rich Man and Lazarus. XVI, 19-31*

This parable illustrates some of the utterances that preceded it. It illustrates how differently man and God judge; it teaches that the Law and the Prophets must be believed and obeyed; it shows forth the result of the wrong use of the goods of this world.

Jesus first presents a picture of two men in this life. One is a rich man, clothed in purple and fine linen, who feasted sumptuously every day. He is a real man of the world, who employs his wealth solely in revelry and luxury. The purple and fine linen show the display he made and indicates his interior. To the riches, precious garments and revelries of the rich man is opposed the poverty and the misery of a certain beggar named Lazarus. This is the only case in which a character in a parable is given a proper name. The reason for the name seems to be that Abraham and the rich man speak of him under circumstances in which it would not have been correct to designate him as a beggar. This poor man lay at the entrance of the rich man's house, full of sores, begging for even the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. He was suffering from some malignant skin disease and was in such a weakened condition that he could not ward off the dogs which added to his misery.

Jesus now shows the difference in their state in the next life. Angels ministered to Lazarus when he died and carried him to Paradise. He is represented as reclining on

was buried. (23) And in Hades, lifting up his eyes when he was in torment, he saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom. (24) And he cried and said: Father Abraham, have mercy on me; and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. (25) And Abraham said to him: Son, remember that thou didst fully receive thy good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is

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*Abraham's bosom*; an intimacy exists between him and the father of the race; to rest upon Abraham's bosom was to be in the joys of Paradise. The rich man also dies and is buried; and here ends all his pleasures and enjoyments. *Hades* is the equivalent for *Sheol*, which, in their original meaning, designated the abode of the dead. *Sheol* was divided into two parts: Paradise, the place of rest and reward; Gehenna, the place of punishment. The context shows that the rich man's place was Gehenna. Jesus uses a popular conception of the next life to draw a lesson therefrom, not to approve of this idea. The conversation between the rich man and Lazarus does not, as such, apply to the next life. It is introduced in order to show forth the cause for the different states of these two men.

The rich man addresses Abraham as *Father*, for he is a descendant of Abraham. And the lesson is evident: mere carnal descent from the great Patriarch is no guarantee of salvation. He asks that Lazarus serve as a medium of relief for him in his sufferings. Thus is the complete reversal of their former states emphasized. The request for relief is denied for two reasons. The first is: *Thou didst fully receive thy good things in thy life time*. The rich man had placed all his trust in riches; they were "his good things," i.e., all that he sought in life, his only aim and purpose. He is condemned, therefore, because of the wrong use he made of riches, because he considered them and the pleasures they

comforted and thou art tormented. (26) And besides all this, there is fixed between us and you a great chasm, so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot, nor from thence come hither. (27) And he said: Then, Father, I beseech thee that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; (28) for I have five brothers; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. (29) And Abraham said to him: They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them. (30) But he said: No, Father Abraham; but if one go to them from the dead, they will believe. (31) But he said to them: If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they believe if one rise from the dead.

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afforded as his greatest good. A second reason for the denial of relief, especially through the ministry of Lazarus, is that there exists between them a *great chasm* which cannot be bridged, so that there is no passing from Hell to Paradise, and vice versa. And this chasm is *fixed*, unchanged and eternal.

The rich man is next represented in the parable as endeavoring to aid his brothers who are still alive. He requests that Lazarus be sent to his five brothers that, by his testimony, they may be saved from eternal torments. It is evident that these brothers are living even as he lived; and unless they be converted from their evil ways, they also shall share his portion in torment. Some commentators endeavor to discover a motive for this request and to determine who (in particular) are meant by the five brothers. But this seems beside the purpose of the parable. The reason for putting the request into the mouth of the rich man is to show the fundamental reason for his evil life and to teach that opportunity had been given him and others to escape damnation. Abraham replies that the five brothers have *Moses and the prophets*, i.e., the Sacred Scriptures in which

are contained the Word of God; and if they *hear them*, believe the Word of God and put it into practice, they shall be saved. The rich man replies from his own experience: *No, Father Abraham*, i.e., they do not hear Moses and the Prophets; or, that is not sufficient for them. But, he adds, they will believe if they see one coming from the dead. To which Abraham replies that if they do not believe God's revelation, established by so many miracles and proofs, they will not believe one who is risen from the dead.

## Chapter XVII

(1) And he said to his disciples: It is impossible that scandals should not come; yet, woe unto him through whom they come. (2) It were well for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea, rather than that he should scandalize one of these little ones.

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### *Four Sayings of Jesus. XVII, 1-10*

The connection between the preceding and these sayings, as well as the connection between the sayings themselves, is difficult to establish. Some deny any connection whatsoever, holding that St. Luke has here gathered together various important admonitions of Jesus, without regard to their chronological place. They seem to be four points upon which Jesus instructed His disciples during this period of His life.

SCANDAL (1-2). A scandal (σκάνδαλον), in its original meaning, is anything that may cause one to fall; it now designates that which causes one to fall morally. It is "direct" when the fall is intended; "indirect" when the sin is foreseen as a result of an action placed. Jesus declares that *it is impossible that scandals should not come*. The necessity is moral, not physical; and is due to the state and condition of man. Urged on by their evil inclinations, men sin; and by their sin others are led into sin, either by invitation or by imitation. The sin is freely placed, the inducement or occasion to sin freely given. Hence Jesus pronounces *Woe* upon him who is the cause of another's sin and spiritual ruin. So great is the sin of scandal that Jesus declares it were better had he who gives scandal been

(3) Take heed to yourselves. If thy brother sin, reprove him; and if he do penance, forgive him. (4) And if he sin against thee seven times in a day and seven times be converted unto thee, saying: I repent; forgive him. (5) And the apostles said to the Lord: Increase our faith. (6) And the Lord said: If you had faith like to a grain of mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree: Be thou rooted up and transplanted into the sea; and it would obey you.

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drowned in the depths of the sea. Death is preferable to the responsibility for another's sin. The *little ones* are they who believe in Christ; they may also be the weak in faith and in conscience.

FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES (3-4). If one offends, *reprove him*, not for the sake of the reproof, but in order to correct him; or, not for your own sake but for the sake of him who has given the offense. The correction is to be made as of brother to brother. And Jesus would have His followers be ready at all times to forgive injuries. The example given of one offending seven times a day and as often requesting forgiveness, would hardly be verified. *Seven times a day* may be understood as "as often as." As often as one offends and makes amends, so often is he to be forgiven. There is to be no limit to the spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness (cf. Mt. xviii, 21-22).

FAITH (5-6). The apostles request Jesus to increase their faith. The *grain of mustard seed* is a symbol of that which is small. Jesus declares that if they had but a small degree of faith they could command a tree to transplant itself and be obeyed. The example is of that which is impossible to man. The aim of Jesus is to teach them that through faith man receives a power from God to do that which is impossible to nature. Through faith, aided by grace, man can fulfil the law and obtain salvation; and the greater his faith, the greater will also be the supernatural

(7) But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say to him when he is come in from the fields: Immediately go, sit down to meat; (8) and will not rather say to him: Make ready my supper and gird thyself, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink? (9) Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded? (I think not.) (10) So you also, when you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do.

(11) And it came to pass that, as he was going to Jeru-

power thus given him, by which he does what is impossible to unaided nature.

HUMILITY (7-10). The lesson of humility is taught by the brief parable of the Unprofitable Servants. The example used is taken from daily experience. When a servant has finished his work in the fields, he is not immediately praised and rewarded. He must first wait on his master; and after he has supplied the wants of the master, then he also may eat and drink. The lesson follows: *When you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which we ought to do.* Even the most blameless Christian only does his duty; he does that which he already owed to God. In him any pride or vainglory in his work is out of place. God does not need his works; neither do these works, in themselves, confer any favor upon Him (cf. Ps. xv, 2). Jesus promises a reward to the faithful servant, but this reward is gratuitous; for without His grace there would be no faithful servant.

#### *The Ten Lepers. XVII, 11-19*

The time of this miracle is merely indicated by the words: *He was going to Jerusalem.* This is the third mention of a



saalem, he passed along the borders of Samaria and Galilee. (12) And as he entered into a certain town, there met him ten men that were lepers, who stood afar off (13) and lifted up their voice, saying: Jesus, master, have mercy on us. (14) And when he saw them, he said to them: Go, show yourselves to the priests. And it came to pass that, as they

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journey to Jerusalem. Most commentators place the miracle after the raising of Lazarus. After that miracle, as St. John records, Jesus retired to Ephraem and from thence came to Jerusalem for the last Pasch. It is most probable that St. Luke now begins the account of this last journey. The place of the miracle is *along the borders* (διὰ μέσων) *of Samaria and Galilee*. This evidently means that Jesus walked eastwardly along the borders of these two districts, a journey which took Him into Perea.

He was met by ten lepers, one of whom was a Samaritan, as we learn later in the narrative. While nothing is said of the nationality of the other nine, the context indicates that they were Jews. Common misery led them to set aside their mutual national prejudices and hatreds. Common faith led them to unite in common prayer. They show their faith in the power of Jesus and their confidence in His goodness. Each prays for all, and all pray for each.

Jesus does not grant them an immediate cure, but puts their faith to a test. As was previously noted, those who were cured of leprosy were obliged to show themselves to the priests in order to be declared clean. Any priest could make this declaration; and each of the lepers would naturally go to the nearest priest, or the one nearest his own home. Jesus sends them to the priests before they are cured; but His command contains a promise of cure if they comply. As they went, obedient to the command of Jesus and with faith in His word, they were cured.

went, they were made clean. (15) And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, went back, with a loud voice glorifying God. (16) And he fell on his face at his feet, giving thanks; and this was a Samaritan. (17) And Jesus answering, said: Were not ten made clean? and where are the nine? (18) There is none found to return and give glory to God but this stranger. (19) And he said to him; Arise, go thy way; for thy faith hath made thee whole.

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One of them returned to give thanks to Jesus for the favor bestowed upon him. Some think that this man returned to Jesus after having shown himself to a priest. However, apart from other considerations, the words *when he saw that he was healed* are decisive; as soon as he realized that the miracle had been wrought and his health restored, he returned to render thanks to his benefactor. The others had also been cured. Their only thought seems to have been to hurry to the priests, have themselves declared clean and so return to the society of men and their own families. The fact that one returned does not mean that he did not obey the command of Jesus or that this command no longer held in his regard. He wishes first to thank the Savior, then show himself to the priest and so return to his home. He thinks first of the Benefactor and not of the enjoyment of the favor granted him. *And this was a Samaritan.* This remark of St. Luke is eloquent.

Jesus rebukes the ingratitude and thoughtlessness of the nine who received their cure as a matter of course. He voices the complaint that, while ten had received a favor, only one returns to thank Him from whom this favor was received. The ingratitude of the nine is more marked because the one who returns is a Samaritan, a stranger, from whom one might expect less. Many receive favors from God, few are thankful; and it is this lack of gratitude on the part of men that Jesus condemns. Since all the lepers

(20) And being asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God should come, he answered and said: The Kingdom of God cometh not in observation. (21) Neither shall they say: Behold here! or: Behold there! For lo, the Kingdom of God is in your midst.

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displayed faith in Jesus and were healed, the final word to the Samaritan: *Thy faith hath made thee whole*, indicate that he now received a higher favor, the cure of his spiritual maladies. He receives a greater favor because he was grateful for the less.

*Coming of the Kingdom and the Son of Man.* XVII, 20-37

It was but natural, after the preaching of John and Jesus and the apostles on the nearness of the Kingdom of God, that some should ask after the time and manner of the coming of the Kingdom. This was done by certain of the Pharisees. There is nothing stated in the text by which we might determine the spirit in which the question was asked. Jesus says nothing of the time, but speaks only of the manner in which the Kingdom shall come. And after speaking of the coming of the Kingdom, He speaks of a related topic, the coming of the Son of Man.

*The Kingdom of God cometh not in observation*, does not mean that the Kingdom of God, the Church, shall be an invisible society, so that no one can behold it. Neither does it mean that there shall be no external rites and ceremonies in the Kingdom of God. Jesus is speaking of the *coming* and not of the *nature* of the Kingdom. The Church will be established without the pomp, glory and external majesty that is found in worldly kingdoms and temporal empires. And hence: *Neither shall they say: Behold here, or behold there*, as one says of a victorious king who establishes himself in a certain place. It must be noted that these words

(22) And he said to his disciples: The days shall come when you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man; and you shall not see it. (23) And they will say to you: See here! and: See there! Go not after nor follow them. (24) For as lightning that lighteneth from under

are not parallel to those of verse 23, where Jesus is speaking of a different topic.

*The Kingdom of God is in your midst* (ἐντὸς ὑμῶν). Jesus tells them what St. John the Baptist had told them (cf. Jo. i, 26), what He himself had already told them (cf. Lk. xi, 21). The Kingdom was already present among them; for it is the Kingdom which He is preaching and establishing. Some wish to understand this word as: "The Kingdom is in your hearts." But this interpretation is impossible; for Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees who did not receive the Kingdom and of whom it could not be said that the Kingdom was in their hearts.

THE SECOND COMING (22-37). Having replied to the Pharisees, Jesus now addresses His apostles and speaks to them of His Second Coming to judge the world. This coming is called here *the day of the Son of Man*, for it is a day upon which He will manifest Himself in glory and majesty as the Judge of all mankind. This day is often called "The Day" and "The Day of the Lord." Jesus indicates in verse 22 that a time of persecution shall come, when the trials and afflictions of His followers are so great that they will wish for the coming of Christ in judgment. They *shall not see it*; not because it will not come, but because He shall permit them to suffer for a time. This desire, and other causes, will induce certain men to predict the end. Jesus cautions them against such false prophets and their predictions as to the date for the end of the world. They will say: *See here! and: See there!* While this may be understood of false prophets in general, the context rather

heaven shineth unto all parts that are under heaven, so shall the Son of Man be in his day. (25) But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation. (26) And as it came to pass in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. (27) They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, till the day that Noe entered into the ark; and the flood came and destroyed them all. (28) Likewise as it came to pass in the days of Lot. They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they

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contains a warning against those who shall declare that the end is at hand and endeavor to fix the date. Such men are not to be heeded; for their prediction is false and impossible. For the Second Coming shall be *as lightning that lighteneth from under Heaven* (and) *shineth unto all parts*. The sense is: As the lightning comes suddenly and illumines all parts of the heavens and the earth, so will the Son of Man come suddenly and visibly to all men. None will be able to foresee the end; all will see it at the same time, so that no previous report can be of any value.

The Second Coming is a day of glory for Christ; but this day of glory will be preceded by a day of sorrow. It is a day of glory for the just; but for them also it is preceded by a day of sorrow. For this reason Jesus makes mention here of His sufferings and of His rejection by men. The sorrow of persecution and suffering is mitigated by the hope and promise of reward.

Jesus further declares the unexpectedness of His Second Coming by comparing men of that time with the men in the days of Noe and Lot (26-30). In the days of Noe the people were given up entirely to external things and the pursuit of worldly affairs; their life went on as usual. Neither the admonitions of Noe nor the building of the ark moved them to repentance; they remained incredulous and the deluge came upon them and destroyed them all. So also

planted, they built; (29) and the day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. (30) Even thus shall it be in the day wherein the Son of Man shall be revealed. (31) In that day, he that shall be on the housetop and his goods in his house, let him not come down to take them away; and he that is in the field, in like manner let him not return back. (32) Re-

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in the days of Lot. They ate and drank, bought and sold, planted and built. They continued in their usual pursuits until the day that Lot left Sodom and the city was suddenly destroyed. Jesus applies the two examples to the last days. At the end of time men will be more engaged in other things than in preparing for the coming of Christ; the end shall come upon them suddenly as the deluge and the destruction of Sodom. On that day *the Son of Man shall be revealed*, i.e., His power and glory shall be made manifest. The Second Coming is often spoken of in the Scriptures as a "revelation" or "manifestation" of Christ (cf. I Cor. i, 7; I Pt. v, 4; II Thes. i, 7).

Jesus adds an admonition on man's attitude in those days. A statement similar to verse 31 is found in Mt. xxiv, 16-18. However, the two texts are not parallel and have a different meaning, for the contexts differ. In Matthew the words refer to the destruction of Jerusalem and admonish haste in leaving the city; here the words are used in reference to the end of the world and there is nothing said of flight. In Matthew the words are to be understood literally; here they must be understood figuratively, for there can be no flight at the end of time. The context speaks of the disaster that shall overwhelm those occupied with the things of the world. Hence, the meaning is that the disciples of Christ must be indifferent in regard to these things, that they be prepared by detachment from the things of this world; so that when the end shall approach there may be no sorrow at relinquishing the

member Lot's wife. (33) Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose it, shall save it. (34) I say to you: In that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, the other left. (35) Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, the other left. (Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.) (36) They answering, said

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things of the world. Lot's wife was attached to the city that was destroyed; she disobeyed the angel's command and looked back upon the city she had left, and so perished. The warning is repeated in verse 33: *Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose it, shall save it.* The importance of following the admonition contained in this sentence is seen from the frequency with which the Savior utters it. The saying has already been explained. And its occurrence here is another proof that verse 31 must be understood figuratively, as stated above. He who seeks temporal things and is attached to them in such a manner that they constitute his first and last thought shall lose all; while he who is ready to relinquish them for the sake of Christ and the practice of virtue, he who is detached from them, shall save himself.

Jesus closes by indicating the fate of men at the end of time (34-35). On the authority of the best MSS. the clauses of verse 35 placed in parenthesis are not original, but seem to have been transferred from Mt. xxiv, 40 to the present context. The two examples given are taken from sleeping and waking hours. Whether men be asleep or awake, whether at rest or at work, they must be prepared for the end. The men sleeping together and the women working together show intimate union which shall come to an end. *One shall be taken*, i.e., saved; *the other left*, i.e., lost.

The apostles ask: *Where, Lord?* Their question means:

to him: Where, Lord? (37) And he said to them: Where the body is, thither will the eagles also be gathered together.

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Where shall the separation and judgment take place? And the question carries with it the desire of knowing how the place may be found. Jesus replies with the proverbial saying: *Where the body is, thither will the eagles also be gathered together.* The "eagles" include all birds of prey. They need no guide, no sign, to tell them where the dead body lies; they are led thither unerringly by instinct. This easy and simple saying has been much beclouded by attempts to apply each single word to the last judgment and by a disregard for the context. The apostles had asked "Where?" i.e., by what sign, or by what means shall we know the place of judgment; they did not ask after the manner or method, as some commentators falsely suppose. Secondly, the proverb simply states that birds of prey do not need to know beforehand where a carcass shall be. Now the application is easy: As birds of prey find the dead body without leader or guide, being drawn by the force of natural instinct, so also shall men be gathered at the judgment, without leader or guide, drawn thither by a supernatural force.



## Chapter XVIII

(1) And he spoke also a parable to them, that we ought always to pray and not faint, (2) saying: There was a judge in a certain city, who feared not God and regarded not man. (3) And there was a certain widow in that city, and she came to him and said: Avenge me of my adversary.

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### *Parable of the Unjust Judge.* XVIII, 1-8

This parable continues the discourse of the preceding chapter. The sequence is: The disciples of Christ will endure trials and tribulations; they should not become weary but continue in prayer. St. Luke states that the parable is intended to teach that *we ought always to pray and not faint*. Praying always may be understood, according to the mode of man's speech, as signifying zeal, earnestness and frequency; or, taken from the parable, to continue to pray until the prayer is answered. We are not to faint, not to lose courage or become weary of prayer, even though it seems that God does not attend.

The figure used is that of a judge *who feared not God and regarded not man*. The disregard for man is no more a good quality in this judge than his lack of the fear of the Lord. It does not mean lack of human respect, so necessary in a just judge, but means an absolute disregard for the rights of men. The second person in the parable is a widow, the universally recognized type of what is weakest, least to be feared, and easiest to oppress. The widow had been wronged and she appeals to the judge to right this wrong. But he would not for a long time, either because he

(4) And he would not for a long time. But afterwards he said within himself: Although I fear not God and regard not man, (5) yet, because this widow is troublesome to me, I will avenge her, lest coming continuously, she weary me. (6) And the Lord said: Hear what the unjust judge saith! (7) And will not God avenge his elect who cry to him day

cared not for the justice of her plea or because she had no means of buying judgment from him. She continues her pleading; and the judge relents. Though he has no fear of God nor any regard for man, he renders judgment in her favor because she has become troublesome to him. She obtained her request because of her continuous pleading.

Jesus applies the parable: *Hear what the unjust judge saith!* The judge did not wish to grant the request of the widow, but he is finally overcome by her persevering petition. If an unjust judge is forced to listen and is won by continuous pleading, how much more will the all-merciful and all-loving Father grant the petitions of those who ask with perseverance! The lesson is continued with an intensive negative (οὐ μὴ), expressing confidence with which an affirmative answer is expected: *And will not God avenge His elect who cry to Him day and night?* Since God is all-just, He will not disregard the justice for which the Saints pray; and since He is all-merciful, He will not remain unmoved by the voice of those who cry to Him for aid. Prayer is not displeasing to Him as was the pleading of the widow to the unjust judge. *Will He delay in their regard?* i.e., will He delay hearing them? This agrees with the reply of Jesus to the question: *I say to you: He will quickly avenge them*, i.e., He will remember them and deliver them from oppression. Taken in connection with the Second Coming, this avenging of the just means their deliverance from the perils of the last days.

and night, and will he delay in their regard? (8) I say to you: He will quickly avenge them. But yet the Son of Man, when he cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

(9) And to some who trusted in themselves as just and despised the rest, he spoke also this parable: (10) Two men went up into the temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, the other a publican. (11) The Pharisee standing, prayed thus

Jesus adds the question: *But yet the Son of Man, when He cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?* The form of question seems to demand a negative reply (cf. Mt. xxiv, 24; II Thes. ii, 3; II Pt. iii, 3). The question, coming after the parable of the unjust judge, may refer to such faith as is trustful in the midst of difficulties, which inspires such hope as is taught in the parable.

#### *The Pharisee and the Publican.* XVIII, 9-14

The description of those against whom the text states that this parable was spoken reveals them to be Pharisees. They *trusted in themselves as just*, i.e., they over-estimated their own goodness, and were confident in themselves as being just. They *despised the rest*, treated all other men as of no worth and far beneath themselves. The parable contains, therefore, a lesson of humility and a condemnation of pride. At the same time it teaches a lesson on prayer.

Jesus represents two men going up to the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a Publican. The two are taken from the most distinguished and from the most despised classes of men. No greater contrast could be presented in those days. It is not to be assumed that these two went in each other's company; for such would have been considered a disgrace by the Pharisee. They went to the Temple at the same time.

The Pharisee is first described at his prayers. Standing

with himself: O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. (12) I fast twice in a week, I give tithes of all that I get. (13) But the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes towards heaven, but struck

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was one of the usual postures for prayer; and no special importance can be attached to the fact that the Pharisee stood while he prayed; for the Publican also stands. The Pharisee however *prayed with himself*, and not to God. He glances, as it were, at God, but contemplates himself. He begins, it seems, to praise and thank God, but his words are praise of himself. He has no needs, he can only thank God that he is *not like the rest of men*. He distinguishes himself, or perhaps his class, from all others; and to these he ascribes the worst of crimes, designating them as extortioners, unjust and adulterers. Among them, and even worse, is his fellow Jew who has entered the Temple and whose presence excites the ill will of the Pharisee. He next names the good works he performs, fasting twice a week and giving tithes of all he gets. He boasts of doing more than the Law requires. Yet, while he boasts of his observance of the Law, he violates that same Law by his pride, self-praise, lack of charity and condemnation of his fellow men. He asks for nothing, being satisfied with himself; he receives nothing, being left to himself.

In contrast is the attitude and the prayer of the Publican. *He stood afar off*, from what we are not told; but knowing the practice of the Pharisees in seeking the most prominent places, the Publican did not approach the front ranks of the worshippers near the Holy of Holies, remaining afar off as unworthy of coming near. This act, together with the bowing of the head and the striking of the breast, were acts of humility flowing from a consciousness of sin. He makes no claims except upon the mercy of God: *O God, be merciful to*

his breast, saying: O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. (14) I say to you: This man went down to his house justified rather than the other; because every one that exalteth himself, shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.

(15) And they brought unto him also infants that he might touch them. But when the apostles saw it, they rebuked them. (16) But Jesus called them to him, saying:

*me, a sinner.* He acknowledges his sin and unworthiness, and prays for pardon.

Jesus draws the lesson, or pronounces His judgment upon these two men: *This man went down to his house justified rather than the other.* The comparison here instituted is not between greater and less, as though the Publican received more than the Pharisee. The comparison is between justification and non-justification; and the justification of the humble Publican is emphasized by the non-justification of the proud Pharisee. And the reason is that every one that exalts himself shall be humbled; while he who humbles himself shall be exalted (cf. Lk. i, 52; Prov. iii, 34; Jas. iv, 6). *Shall be humbled, shall be exalted*, means in the sight of and before God. They shall receive or lose the grace of God, upon which salvation depends.

### *The Little Children.* XVIII, 15-17

This event is recorded, in almost identical words, in Mt. xix, 13-15 and Mk. x, 13-16.

The people, in a certain place, brought their children to Jesus, *that He might touch them.* Matthew is more explicit: That He should impose hands upon them and pray. The parents desire Jesus to bless their little ones. The apostles rebuked the people, endeavoring to keep them from bringing the children to Jesus. Perhaps they thought it beneath the

Suffer the children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God. (17) Amen, I say to you: Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it.

(18) And a certain young ruler asked him, saying: Good master, what shall I do to possess eternal life? (19) And

Lord's dignity to receive the children; or, perhaps they thought He should not be bothered.

Jesus calls the children to Himself and rebukes the disciples. He signifies the care and reverence of which the little children are worthy and also His love for them. *For of such is the Kingdom of God.* The Kingdom is not only theirs but is "of such." These children and all who are like to them in purity of morals, uprightness of intention and simplicity of life, belong to the Kingdom of God. This is stated: *Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it.* They shall not enter into the Kingdom who do not "receive," i.e., do not approach it and accept its doctrine, with childlike faith and confidence, with humility and docility.

### *The Rich Young Man.* XVIII, 18-30

This incident, in the same context, is found in Mt. xix, 16-29 and Mk. x, 17-31. The various differences in detail will be noted in the explanation. For obvious reasons, as shall be seen from the narrative, attempts have been made to find something wrong with this young man, even that he was a hypocritical Pharisee. But none of the accounts give the slightest indication of ill will or evil purpose in him. Attention may be called to a few points: His question, according to the text, was asked in good faith; Mk. states explicitly that he approached Jesus with reverence; Jesus replies clearly and directly to his question; Mk. states that Jesus looked upon him with love; Jesus invites him to become a disciple; and finally, had he come with evil intention, he would not have gone away sorrowful.

Jesus said to him: Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, God. (20) Thou knowest the commandments: Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; honor thy father and mother. (21) But he said: All these things have I observed from my youth. (22) And when Jesus

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The young man asks Jesus the all-important question as to what he must do in order to be saved. The first part of the Lord's reply to the question is: *Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, God.* The word "good" must be emphasized in these words. The young man had addressed Him as "Good master," and Jesus asks him the reason for giving Him this title. The young man is sincere; he has heard and seen Jesus, and this caused him to use the title. Jesus does not deny that He is good; neither does He deny that He is God. The young man addressed Him as man; and Jesus points to God as the only essential Good. Then Jesus tells him that the requirement for salvation is the keeping of the commandments. He mentions those commandments which relate to man's dealings with his fellow-men. The proper observance of these commandments involves and supposes the observance of the commandments relating to the love of God and duties towards Him. The young man replied: *All these things have I kept from my youth.* It is certainly an unsound exegesis that distorts these words into a declaration: "I have always known this." Such a meaning is contrary to the context and to the very words themselves. The young man declares that he has observed the commandments from his youth. His statement is neither a Pharisaical boast nor an expression of dissatisfaction at learning nothing new. He is truthful and sincere. Had he been otherwise, Jesus would not have looked upon him with love at this instant, as Mark states; moreover, our Lord's next words confirm the truthfulness of the man.

heard, he said to him: Yet one thing is wanting thee: sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me. (23) But having heard these things, he became exceedingly sorrowful; for he was very rich.

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*One thing is wanting thee;* or, as Matthew says more clearly: "If thou wilt be perfect, etc." The one thing "wanting" to his perfection, is proposed: *Sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.* Jesus advises the young man to distribute his worldly possessions among the poor; and promises that by so doing, his goods shall be converted into treasures for eternity. Having cast off the things of the world, he is to follow Jesus. Hence, Jesus calls him to embrace the state of voluntary poverty and become one of His closest companions. Two ways are here clearly pointed out: The ordinary way which consists in the keeping of the commandments; The way of perfection which consists in the observance of the counsels, of which voluntary poverty is one. Eternal life is promised to those who follow either way. Attempts have been made to do away with this distinction by saying that Jesus here mentions a precept which the young man had not been observing; or by saying that Jesus here means the love of God above all things which the young man did not possess. This is evidently false; for in either supposition the first answer of Jesus to the question concerning the requisite for salvation would be incomplete and false; and this we cannot admit. Neither in the commandments nor in the teaching of Jesus is voluntary poverty made an absolute and general condition for salvation; and nowhere is the relinquishing of worldly possessions equal to the love of God. Jesus asks the young man to do more than is required by the commandments; He calls the young man to embrace the state of perfection and the discipleship.



(24) And Jesus seeing him become sorrowful, said: How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the Kingdom of God! (25) For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. (26) And they that heard it, said: Who

The young man rejects the call, being made sorrowful. The cause of his sorrow was his riches; and he had not the courage to make the sacrifice and fulfil the conditions for perfection. He did not deride Jesus as the Pharisees did. He went away sorrowful, not because he had learned nothing new, but because perfection required a condition which he was not ready to fulfil.

DANGER OF RICHES (24-30). Jesus takes occasion from the action of the young man to issue a warning on the danger of riches: *How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the Kingdom of God.* While riches had not prevented the young man from keeping the commandments, they prevented him from embracing the more perfect way of life; and what became of him we do not know. What riches had done to this young man in regard to perfection, they do to many others in regard to the observance of the commandments. This danger, or difficulty, is expressed in the proverb: *It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.* Many curious, and even grotesque, attempts have been made to explain this saying; all of which is unnecessary. The "camel passing through the eye of a needle" is simply a figure of great difficulty. Jesus uses one of the proverbial expressions of His time; like expressions occur in the Talmud. It must be remembered that proverbs and similes are not to be understood and applied literally when used as comparisons. The words emphasize the difficulty to salvation presented by riches.

The apostles fear for the salvation of all men. For they

then can be saved? (27) He said to them: The things that are impossible to men are possible to God. (28) Then Peter said: Behold, we have left all things and followed thee. (29) And he said to them: Amen, I say to you: There is no man that hath left house, or wife, or parents, or brethren, or children, for the Kingdom of God's sake, (30) who shall

do not ask: What rich man shall be saved? but: *Who then can be saved?* Either they considered all men rich or desirous of riches, or they concluded that salvation must be equally difficult for all men. Jesus replies that what is impossible with men, is possible with God. The reply of Jesus is as general as the question of the apostles; so that He does not speak of the salvation of the rich alone. Salvation is impossible to all men, if they be left to themselves; but it is possible with the aid of God.

St. Peter, as head and spokesman for the others, reminds Jesus that they have left all things. They had not forsaken wealth; but had given up all things for the sake of Christ. It is not the amount, but the act, that constitutes the virtue and the good work. Jesus declares the reward in store for all those who have given up all things in order to follow Him. The promise is not to be restricted to the apostles, for the words of Jesus are general. The leaving of all things must not be due to mere natural motives; it must be *for the Kingdom of God's sake*, i.e., must have some reference to the Kingdom of God, its duties or virtues. Jesus does not mean that man may forsake his wife or children, or those who are dependant upon him, whom virtue and duty demand that he support. The statement must be taken in the spirit in which it is spoken; and the spirit here is that every object of man's natural love must be loved less than the Kingdom of God; and that for the sake of the Kingdom, all should be relinquished, if necessary or lawful.

not receive much more in the present, and life everlasting in the world to come.

(31) Then he took unto him the twelve and said to them: Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets of the Son of Man shall be accomplished. (32) For he shall be delivered to the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon; (33) and having scourged him, they shall put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again. (34) And they understood none of these things, and this word was hidden from them; and they understood not the things that were said.

(35) Now it came to pass, when he drew nigh to Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the wayside begging.

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*Announcement of the Passion. XVIII, 31-34*

This is the clearest of the Lord's predictions concerning His sufferings and death; and it is also found in Mt. xx, 17-19 and Mk. x, 31-34. The time is very probably the week preceding the death of Jesus. He took the apostles aside, for this prophecy concerned them especially. But the apostles did not understand the meaning of Jesus. They certainly understood the meaning of the words themselves, which are so clear that they need no explanation. They did not understand then that all this was to be literally fulfilled in regard to Jesus.

*The Blind Man at Jericho. XVIII, 35-43*

This miracle is also recorded in Mt. xx, 29-34 and Mk. x, 46-52. The three accounts, when compared, present two difficulties. Mk. and Lk. state that "a certain man" received his sight, while Mt. states that two blind men were cured; Lk. states that the miracle took place when Jesus entered the city, while Mt. and Mk. state that the cure took place when Jesus left the city. As regards the number of men cured, we have the same explanation as for the demoniacs of Gerasa.

(36) And when he heard the multitude going by, he asked what this meant. (37) And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. (38) And he cried out, saying: Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me. (39) And they that went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace; but he cried out the more: Son of David, have mercy on me. (40) And Jesus standing, commanded that he be brought to him. And when he was come near, he asked him: (41) What wilt thou that I do unto you? But he said: Lord, that I may receive my sight. (42) And Jesus said to

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Two men were cured, one of whom was better known or was the principle actor in the event. Lk. and Mk. do not deny the cure of the other, but simply prescind from his presence. As regards the place of the cure, there are two opinions worthy of note: 1. Jesus cured a blind man as he entered Jericho (Lk.) and another as he left the city (Mk.); and Mt., speaking of the latter miracle, mentions the first man with the second. 2. When Jesus entered the city, a blind man appealed to Him, but was not heard then; with a companion he renews the appeal the following day and is heard. As on other occasions, Lk. finishes the narrative of the event, which began when Jesus entered the city, before narrating what transpired in the city.

Since the Feast of the Pasch was at hand, great multitudes were on their way to Jerusalem. It seems that Jesus was in company with a larger number than usual. A blind man, being advised that Jesus was passing by, cried to Him for aid. He addresses Jesus with the recognized title for the Messias: *Son of David*. He had certainly heard of the works of Jesus, and from what he heard concluded that Jesus was the Messias. The multitude rebuked the blind man, commanding him to remain quiet. Undaunted, the man continues his cry for mercy, manifesting his faith in Jesus and persevering in prayer.

Jesus makes those who rebuked the blind man His messengers and commands them to bring the man to Him.

him: Receive thy sight; thy faith hath made thee whole. (43) And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

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Jesus asks what he desires in order to show the multitude that the blind man was no ordinary beggar, to attract their attention to the miracle, to excite greater faith and hope in the blind man. He requests the restoration of sight; and Jesus answers the request in the same terms in which it was made. The faith and perseverance of the blind man is rewarded; at the word of Jesus, he recovers his sight. He joins with the multitude in giving thanks to God. *Followed Him* does not necessarily mean that the blind man became a disciple; he joined the multitude accompanying Jesus.

## Chapter XIX

(1) And entering in, he was passing through Jericho. (2) And behold, a man named Zacheus; and he was a chief of the publicans, and was rich. (3) And he sought to see Jesus, who he was; and he could not for the crowd, because he was small of stature. (4) And running before, he climbed up into a sycamore tree, that he might see him; for he was to pass that way. (5) And when Jesus came to the place,

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### *Zacheus the Publican. XIX, 1-10*

There lived in Jericho a certain man named Zacheus, who was a *chief of the publicans* (ἀρχιτελώνης). This title occurs nowhere else. It may be that he was a superintendent over the other tax-collectors of that district, an official whom the Romans called "magister" or "sub-magister." Jericho was a frontier town, through which a large trade passed; and there must have been a number of publicans in the city. Due to the large income from the trade and to the fact that he held a prominent position among the publicans, Zacheus had amassed a fortune.

Zacheus had, without doubt, heard much of Jesus and was desirous of seeing Him as He passed through the town. But he was small of stature and the crowd was so great that he could not realize his desire in the ordinary way. Running before the crowd, he takes his place in a "sycamore tree," the fig-mulberry, being related to the fig tree by its fruit and to the mulberry by its leaves. He is moved to this effort by a beginning of faith. And his faith is rewarded. For when Jesus came near the place, He calls Zacheus by

looking up, he saw him, and said to him: Zacheus, make haste and come down; for this day I must abide in thy house. (6) And he made haste and came down; and received him with joy. (7) And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying: He is gone to be the guest of a man that is a sinner. (8) But Zacheus standing, said to the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged anyone in anything, I restore fourfold. (9) Jesus said to him: This day is salvation come to this house, because

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name, bids him to descend from the tree and become His host. *I must abide in thy house* expresses a necessity of satisfying His love for the salvation of souls. When the people saw Jesus enter into the house of Zacheus, they murmured because He went to be the guest of a sinner. The publicans were considered as the greatest sinners; and many of them were dishonest in the collection of taxes. This murmuring shows that Zacheus was a Jew, as his name implies; for had he been a pagan, this would have been mentioned as an aggravating circumstance.

Zacheus, in whom there was a beginning of faith, responds to the grace granted him by the visit of Jesus. Standing in the presence of Jesus, he declares: *The half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged anyone in anything, I restore four-fold.* He expresses a two-fold resolve, firmly decided upon in his mind, as the present tense indicates. He resolved to give half of his possessions to the poor, and to make restitution for any wrong he might have done his fellow men. He is resolved to practice charity and justice. Ordinarily, two-fold restitution was required by the law (cf. Ex. xxii, 4-9); at times four-fold restitution was required (Ex. xxii, 1). Zacheus resolves to accept the greater penalty for his misdeeds.

His conversion is sincere and Jesus declares: *This day is salvation come to this house*, i.e., grace and forgiveness of

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he also is a son of Abraham. (10) For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

(11) And as they were hearing these things, he added and spoke a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem and because they thought that the Kingdom of God should immediately be manifested. (12) He said therefore: A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself

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sin is granted to Zacheus. For *he also is a son of Abraham* in spite of his past sins which are now forgiven. Jesus came for him as well as for others of the Chosen People; he was one of the lost sheep of the House of Israel, whom Jesus had come to seek and to save.

#### *Parable of the Pounds. XIX, 11-28*

This parable is similar to the parable of the talents, given in Mt. xxv, 14-30. Though the two resemble each other and teach the same lessons, they must be considered as entirely distinct. Time, place, audience and major details of the parables differ.

The text mentions the reason why Jesus spoke this parable and also indicates its general theme. He was nigh to Jerusalem and the people thought that the Kingdom of God should be immediately manifested. By entering the house of Zacheus, Jesus showed that His Kingdom was spiritual. This thought is contained in the parable. There was great expectation among the people and the disciples of Jesus that the Kingdom would soon be manifested in glory. It was to calm this enthusiasm that Jesus teaches that a considerable period of time is to elapse before the final establishment. We may interpret and apply the parable, part by part, since the general theme is known from the introduction.

The image of a nobleman going into a far country to receive a kingdom is based on the relations between the Eastern tributary princes and the Emperor. The Herods



a kingdom and to return. (13) And calling his ten servants, he gave them ten pounds and said: Trade therewith till I come. (14) But his citizens hated him; and they sent an embassy after him, saying: We will not have this man

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and the ruling houses of Chalcis, Damascus, Abila, were obliged to petition the Emperor to obtain the right of ruling their own subjects; not infrequently the prince went to Rome in person. The kingdom to be received, in the parable, is not in the far country; for the nobleman goes thither to receive the grant and then is to return to his own country to exercise the power given him. Application: *The nobleman* is Jesus, who is of noble birth by reason of His Divinity. The *far country* is Heaven, whither He is to ascend and receive, as Man, a kingdom and dominion over the human race. Heaven is here represented as a *far country* in order to remove the idea of an immediate return and public manifestation of the power and glory of Jesus.

Before departing, the nobleman calls his ten servants and gives them ten pounds. The *pound* or *mna* was worth about 100 denarii. The intention of the nobleman is to test the worth of his servants. They are to trade with the money given them until he returns; the return is stated as uncertain in time. Application: The *ten pounds* represent the various gifts and talents given to man. They are to be used for the glory of God and for the salvation of one's soul. The application should be made general, applied to all men and not certain ones, by reason of the persons addressed and by reason of the plan and nature of the parable.

After the nobleman left, his fellow-citizens, who hated him, sent an embassy after him with the declaration that they would not have him reign over them. This action on part of the citizens was of frequent enough occurrence that there is no need of supposing that Jesus had a particular case in mind. Sometimes before the appointment was made,

reign over us. (15) And it came to pass that he returned, having received the kingdom. And he commanded his servants to be called, to whom he had given the money, that he might know what they had gained by trading. (16) And the first came to him, saying: Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. (17) And he said to him: Well done, thou good servant! Because thou hast been faithful in a little, thou shalt have power over ten cities. (18) And the second came, saying: Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. (19) And he said to him: Be thou also over five cities. (20) And

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sometimes after it was made, the people of a country protested against it. The application of this part of the parable is to be made to all those who refuse to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah and reject His claims.

When the nobleman returned, after receiving the Kingdom, he first calls his servants to give an account. Though all were called for the account, only three are mentioned as examples. The first said: *Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds*; and the second declared that the one given him had increased five-fold. As a reward, the nobleman appointed the first over ten cities, and the second over five, rewarding each in proportion to the gain made. It will also be noted that these two servants ascribe the gain to the pound which the nobleman had given them. Application: *The return* is the Second Coming of Jesus for the world, death for each individual. The *account* is an image of the account which each must give of the use he has made of his gifts and talents. All good accomplished must be referred to the graces and gifts received, for man could do nothing without them. The *reward* represents the recompense that will be made to each in proportion to the manner in which he has used the graces and opportunities given him.

The third servant called has gained nothing, but returns the pound which he had received. He does not seem to be

another came, saying: Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I kept laid up in a napkin; (21) for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man. Thou takest up what thou didst not lay down, and thou reapest what thou didst not sow. (22) He saith to him: Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I am an austere man, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping what I did not sow. (23) And why, then, didst thou not give my money into the bank? And I, at my return, might have exacted it with usury. (24) And he said to them that stood by: Take the pound away from him, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (25) And they say to him:

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confessing a fault; he declares that he is giving back what he received. But he realizes that his failure to make use of the money constitutes a fault, and he begins to make excuses. His excuse is rather a calumny. He accuses the nobleman of being severe and avaricious, taking what he did not lay down and reaping what he did not sow. The ways of fortune are uncertain; so he concluded that it was best to do nothing. The nobleman passes judgment upon him: *Out of thy own mouth I judge thee*. If he knew and declared that his master was a severe man, knew the purpose for which the money had been given him, knew that he would have to render an account of the manner in which he used the money, he should have come to a different conclusion. He orders the pound taken from him and given to the first servant. Application: This third servant represents all those who have not made use of God's grace and have neglected their duty. The non-use of grace and opportunities for doing good constitutes a fault that merits punishment. The particulars of his excuse are generally considered as details which need not be applied, except in so far as they teach that a strict and rigorous account will be demanded from each.

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Lord, he hath ten pounds. (26) I say to you, that to every one that hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him. (27) But as for these my enemies, who would not have me reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me.

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The judgment of the nobleman seems to be interrupted. When he commands that the pound be given to him who has ten, they remind him that this servant already has ten pounds. Some commentators think that Jesus was interrupted by His hearers, who thought that He was spoiling the image. More commonly this interruption is considered as part of the parable. The words: *To every one that hath, shall be given; and him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him*, contain a lesson that does not refer to the primary purpose of the parable. The second part of the sentence should be understood in the following manner: "He that hath not" according as was demanded by the nobleman, "that which he hath" is the pound given him, and this is also taken from him. The lesson is that he who corresponds with the grace of God, receives additional graces; while he who does not respond to grace shall lose what he already has. The lesson does not apply to the Second Coming, or to judgment, except that those who are condemned are deprived of whatever honor or privileges they may have had during life.

Finally, the nobleman passes sentence upon those who refused to acknowledge him as their King. They are made to pay the supreme penalty. The application is made to all who refuse to recognize Christ; they shall pay the supreme penalty in the next life.

#### *The Entry into Jerusalem. XIX, 28-44*

This manifestation of Jesus as the Messiah is recorded in all four Gospels: Mt. xxi, 1-11; Mk. xi, 1-11; Jo. xii, 12-19. From the first

(28) And having said these things, he went before, going up to Jerusalem. (29) And it came to pass that, when he was come nigh to Bethpage and Bethany at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of his disciples, saying: (30) Go into the town which is over against you; and at your entering you shall find a colt whereon no man hath ever sat; loose him and bring him hither. (31) And if any man shall ask

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three Gospels it might seem that Jesus proceeded directly from Jericho to Jerusalem. The Fourth Gospel tells us that Jesus came to Bethany six days before the Pasch; that a supper was there prepared for Him (Saturday evening) at which Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, anointed Him; that Jesus entered Jerusalem on the following day (Sunday). Mt. and Mk. state that the procession started at Bethpage, which is nearer Jerusalem than Bethany. At the former village, Jesus sent the apostles to obtain the colt on which He entered the city. Jo. speaks of the people who came forth from the city when they heard that Jesus was in Bethany. They meet and join the procession which is bringing Jesus to Jerusalem.

Our Gospel gives the geographical notice: *He was come nigh to Bethpage and Bethany, unto the mount called Olivet.* The two villages were situated on the eastern slopes of Mt. Olivet, Bethpage being nearer the summit than Bethany. Much needless discussion seems to have been caused by the order in which the two villages are mentioned, some even going to the extent of "reconstructing" the entire narrative. Both villages, as already stated, were near each other and on the mount, and Jesus passed through both villages. Bethpage is mentioned first, because it was from this village that the actual procession began. Jesus left Bethany and came as far as Bethpage with His apostles. Pilgrims encamped outside the city, as was customary for the great feasts, very likely accompanied them. When they were near to Bethpage, He commanded two of the apostles to go into the town. There they would find a colt, upon which no man

you: Why do you loose him? you shall say thus to him: Because the Lord hath need of him. (32) And they that were sent went their way and found even as he had said unto them. (33) And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said to them: Why loose you the colt? (34) And they said: The Lord hath need of him. (35) And they brought him to Jesus. And throwing their garments on the colt, they set Jesus thereon. (36) And as they went, they spread their garments underneath the way. (37) And when he was now

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had as yet sat. They were to loose the colt and bring it to Jesus. In case they be asked the reason for the action, they are to reply: *The Lord hath need of him.* This colt was unbroken and had never carried a burden. This was eminently fitting. In the Old Law, only such animals as had never borne the yoke or been used for profane purpose were used for sacred and religious purposes, being thus dedicated to the Lord (Num. xix, 2; Dt. xxi, 3). Though the colt is an humble beast of burden, yet upon such an animal had Josue and David, and many kings and prophets, entered the Holy City. In the answer that the apostles are instructed to give the owners of the colt, Jesus speaks as the Lord, the Messiah, who exercises His rights among the people. From these words it may also be inferred that the owner was a friend or disciple of Jesus, who would be willing to let the animal go when he learned who wanted it. The two disciples go into the village, find all as Jesus had told them, unloose the colt with permission of the owners and bring it to Jesus.

They immediately realize, or were told, the purpose of the act. They place their garments upon the colt and place Jesus thereon. Others spread their garments underneath the way. This latter act was one of the greatest honor. From the other Gospels we learn that the people cut branches from the trees to carry in the procession, as was customary

coming near the descent of mount Olivet, the whole multitude of his disciples began joyfully to praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, saying: (38) Blessed is the king who cometh in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven, and glory in the highest! (39) And

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on days of public joy. The road from Bethpage to Jerusalem, which the procession took, passes over the summit of Mount Olivet. *Near the descent* is on the summit of the mount near the western slope. At this point, the Holy City and the Temple came into view; and perhaps here the procession which came forth from the city, according to John, met and joined the multitude accompanying Jesus. The sight of the city and the Temple, the meeting of the two throngs, the signification of the procession, fill the multitude with enthusiasm. They break forth in hymns of joy and thanksgiving, proclaiming Jesus as the Messias.

There is a slight difference in the wording of these acclamations, as found in the four Gospels; but a comparison will show that the difference is in words only and not in sense. *Blessed is the King who cometh in the name of the Lord* is a declaration that Jesus possesses kingly right and power and that He comes in the name of God; therefore, a declaration that He is the Messias. This same phrase is found in the other Gospels. Matthew adds that the people proclaimed Jesus "the Son of David," a title for the Messias who, as a descendant of David, was to be a king. *Peace in heaven*; peace and salvation is granted in Heaven, whence it descends upon earth. There is peace in Heaven because man is reconciled with God through Jesus. *Glory in the highest* is an exclamation of praise and thanksgiving for the favors of God, in particular for the sending of the Messias. This is also found in the other Gospels, which use the term *Hosanna*. This latter word is derived from the Hebrew *Hoshia na*, meaning "Save, we pray." The term lost its

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some of the Pharisees from the multitude said to him: Master, rebuke thy disciples. (40) And answering, he said to them: I say to you that if these hold their peace, the stones will cry out.

(41) And when he drew near, seeing the city, he wept over it, saying: (42) If thou also hadst known, in this thy

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original meaning and became a wish or acclamation, a cry of thanksgiving and praise.

The Pharisees, who were present at the occasion, did not take part in the popular demonstration. They are angered and request Jesus to put an end to it by forbidding the people to continue. Six months previously, at the feast of tabernacles, they had requested that Jesus tell them whether He was the Messiah (cf. Jo. x, 24). They now receive the answer; for if Jesus does not forbid the acclamations, He thereby approves of them and declares that He is the Messiah. The demonstration cannot be hindered, as He says: *If these hold their peace, the stones will cry out.* Jesus uses a figure of speech (used also by Habc. 2, 11; and Ovid, *Metam.* 2, 697), denoting necessity of an occurrence and the impossibility of secrecy or hindrance. The triumphal entry into Jerusalem was a providential necessity; it so fitted into the divine plan that Jesus be publicly acclaimed as the Messiah that, if men did not give Him this honor, the very stones would cry out in praise of Him.

JESUS WEEPS OVER JERUSALEM (41-44). The Gospels record two occasions upon which Jesus wept. He wept at the tomb of Lazarus, in compassion for men sorrowing at the death of their loved ones; He weeps here in compassion for the Holy City, because of its sin and the punishment which was to come upon it because of this sin. *If thou also hadst known*, does not express a comparison, but a wish that the city had known, on this day when such a manifest testimony is given to the dignity of Jesus. It expresses the



day, the things that are to thy peace! But now they are hidden from thy eyes. (43) For the days shall come upon thee; and thy enemies shall cast a rampart about thee, and compass thee round, and hem thee in on every side, (44) and beat thee to the ground, and thy children who are in thee; and they shall not leave a stone upon a stone; because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation.

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wish that the people had realized the *things that are to thy peace*, i.e., what would bring peace and ward off disaster, viz., the reception of Jesus and belief in Him as the Messiah. But these things were hidden from them now because of their rejection of grace (cf. Jo. xii, 37).

Because of its crimes, punishment shall come upon the city. Jesus foresees and foretells this punishment. The prophecy was fulfilled when, in the year 70, Titus built a wall around the city to prevent escape and to shut off all supplies, surrounding the city and harrassing it on every side. After being subjected to the horrors of war, famine and pestilence, the city was reduced to ruins and many thousands of its inhabitants slain or sold into slavery. The reason for the punishment is: *Because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation*, i.e., the time of grace and opportunity for salvation, offered by Jesus and the apostles.

St. Luke does not mention the actual entry into the city. He supposes it. The entry is briefly described in the other Gospels.

### *Cleansing of the Temple. XIX, 45-48*

The three Synoptic Gospels give this event in almost identical words: Mt. xxi, 12-13; Mk. xi, 15-17. Mt. and Lk. make no note of the passing of time between the entry into the city and the cleansing of the Temple. From Mk. we learn that this later event occurred the day following the entry into Jerusalem. Since neither Mt. nor Lk.

(45) And entering into the temple, he cast out them that sold therein, (46) saying to them: It is written: My house is a house of prayer; but you have made it a den of robbers.

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give any note of time and since the connecting particle "and" does not denote immediate sequence in time, there is no contradiction in the accounts.

Entering into the Temple, Jesus cast out the buyers and the sellers. Matthew and Mark add that He likewise overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the chairs of those who sold doves. The part of the Temple to which reference is made in this episode is the Court of the Gentiles, where the temple-traffic was carried on. This traffic consisted in the sale of animals for the sacrifices and in the changing of money. According to the Law, every Israelite had to offer a half-shekel as Temple Tribute each year. Money which bore any kind of pagan image could not be offered; and since Roman coins were in use in Palestine, practically the entire tribute passed through the hands of the money-changers who received a small fee for making the change. Those who came from foreign lands could not conveniently bring with them the animals that were needed for the various sacrifices. To free them from needless care and worry and to insure them that they could obtain animals fit for sacrifice, these were offered for sale in the Temple. The people needed the half-shekel in order to make their offerings, they also needed the animals that were to be offered in sacrifice. Lawful though the sale of the animals and the changing of money was, and even necessary, it profaned the Temple of God.

Jesus drove them from the Temple, saying: *It is written: My house is a house of prayer; but you have made it a den of robbers.* Jesus quotes Is. lvi, 7. The money-changers and the buyers and sellers made the house of God a den of

(47) And he was teaching daily in the temple. And the chief priests and the scribes and the rulers of the people sought to destroy him. (48) And they found not what they might do, for all the people were attentive to hear him.

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robbers by the fraud practiced and the exorbitant prices they demanded. Further, the commotion and wrangling, caused by the trafficking, disturbed those who desired to worship God and changed His house into a market place.

The last two verses of the chapter contain a summary of our Lord's work in Jerusalem during the last days of His life. Jesus taught daily in the Temple. All who held authority, chief priests, rulers and scribes, were arrayed against Him. For the present they were unable, or afraid, to proceed against Him, for the people were still attached to Him and heard Him willingly. The next chapter records the various attempts to discredit Jesus in the eyes of the people.

## Chapter XX

(1) And it came to pass on one of those days that, as he was teaching in the temple and preaching the gospel, there came to him the chief priests and the scribes with the ancients; (2) and they spoke, saying: Tell us by what authority thou doest these things? or who is he that gave thee

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### *The Question of Authority. XX, 1-8*

This is the first question proposed to Jesus on the day following the cleansing of the Temple (Tuesday). The question and answer is also found in Mt. xxi, 23-27 and Mk. xi, 27-33. It was proposed while Jesus was teaching in the Temple. The questioners are a group made up of chief priests, scribes and ancients, the latter being persons in high standing among the people. Presumably, they act in the name of the Great Council and in the interests of religion. Their question regards the entire mission and work of Jesus, not only the cleansing of the Temple, and seeks to know what authority Jesus had and whence He obtained this authority. The double question means: Have you authority from God or from man, and through what medium was the authority given you? Just what reply they expected, or to what they intended to lead the inquiry, is not entirely certain. At any rate, they hoped to bring Jesus into conflict with the Great Council, the highest religious authority in Israel. The time was not ripe for a declaration of His Divine Authority; and besides, the rulers of Israel had already received sufficient proofs that His authority was from God. The present question is but a snare. Jesus

this authority? (3) And he answering, said to them: I will ask you one thing. Tell me: (4) The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men? (5) But they thought within themselves, saying: If we shall say: From heaven; he will say: Why did you not believe him? (6) But if we shall say: From men; the whole people will stone us, for they are persuaded that John was a prophet. (7) And they replied that they knew not whence it was. (8) And Jesus said to

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unmasks their evil motives, and then gives an indirect reply in the parable which follows.

In reply Jesus asks them "one thing"; and if they answer this correctly, they have the answer to their own question. *The baptism of John, was it from Heaven or of men?* We are to understand this as referring to the entire mission of St. John the Baptist, whose mission was to prepare the people by the baptism unto penance. The Great Council had sent an embassy to him (cf. Jo. i, 19-27) just as they now sent an embassy to Jesus. It was their office and duty to inquire into the credentials of a preacher or teacher. They should have made a declaration in regard to the mission and work of St. John.

There were three possible answers to the question: "From Heaven"; "Of man"; "We do not know." They dare not choose the first, for they are aware of the conclusion that would be drawn. If John's mission were from Heaven, they were obliged to accept his teaching and his testimony to Jesus. But they had not accepted the mission of John. They dare not choose the second and deny that St. John came as a prophet sent from God. The people had accepted him as a prophet, and the leaders were afraid of incurring the ill-will of the people by declaring that John was not a prophet. So they choose the third and declare that they do not know whence John had his authority. To this Jesus immediately replies that He will not tell them

them: Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

(9) And he began to speak to the people this parable: A man planted a vineyard and let it out to husbandmen; and he was abroad for a long time. (10) And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give

whence He has His authority. The answer of the chief priests and scribes was a confession of incompetence in their own special function. They professed inability to decide in a matter so prominent and important as the mission of St. John. This declaration, after they had officially investigated the matter, demonstrates their ill-will and prejudice, and destroys any right to receive a direct answer from Jesus. An indirect answer is given in the following parable.

### *The Wicked Husbandmen.* XX, 9-19

Mt. gives three parables in this place, all connected with the question of authority. Mk. and Lk. give one parable. Parallels to Lk. are: Mt. xxi, 33-46 and Mk. xii, 1-12. The few minor differences in the three accounts will be treated in the explanation of the parable.

The image used is that of a vineyard, which occurs frequently in the Scriptures and was well known to the hearers of the Lord. St. Luke has omitted from his account the usual and necessary adjuncts to the Palestinian vineyard: The hedge, the wine-press, the watch tower. His account supposes what is mentioned in the others, viz., that the vineyard, planted by a certain man, was complete in every detail. The *husbandmen*, to whom the vineyard was let, are tenant-farmers. They are to cultivate and tend the vineyard, paying a certain percentage of the fruits as rental. The master of the vineyard is represented as going into a far country, this detail being added to explain why he rented out the vineyard instead of caring for it himself.

him of the fruit of the vineyard. But the husbandmen beat him and sent him empty away. (11) And again he sent another servant. But the husbandmen beat him also, and treating him shamefully, sent him empty away. (12) And again he sent the third; and they wounded him also and cast him out. (13) Then the lord of the vineyard said: What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; it may be that they will reverence him. (14) But when the husbandmen saw

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The efforts of the lord of the vineyard to collect the rental are next described. There is here a difference of detail between the three accounts. Matthew says, in a general way, that he sent several servants who were ill-treated and killed, and that he later sent others who met with the same fate as the first. Mark says that he sent three servants, each at a different time; and when their efforts failed, he sent others. Luke mentions only the first servants. Matthew gives a summary account of the servants whom Mark and Luke mention singly; and Luke does not mention the second group of servants. The summing up in Matthew and the omission in Luke does not change the sense or substance of the parable. All efforts of the lord to collect the fruits of the vineyard through his servants were without avail. There is a gradation in the treatment of the servants by the husbandmen. The first is beaten and sent away; the second is beaten, treated shamefully and sent away; the third is wounded and left to die.

After the servants have failed, the lord of the vineyard sends his son: *What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; it may be that they will reverence him.* Mark emphasizes the fact that this beloved son was an only-son. Matthew and Luke also show this by calling him the "heir of the vineyard," and by stating that the husbandmen hoped to obtain the vineyard by killing him. The words of the lord of the vineyard do not express a mere doubtful hope, but

him, they thought within themselves, saying: This is the heir; let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. (15) And casting him out of the vineyard, they killed him. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do to them? (16) He will come and destroy those husbandmen, and will give the vineyard to others. But they hearing, said to him: God forbid! (17) But he looking on them, said: What, then, is this that is written: The stone which the builders

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an assured expectation in modified form. But the only-son of the lord of the vineyard receives no better treatment than did the servants. At sight of him, coming alone and unguarded, the husbandmen are filled with hope of becoming owners of the vineyard. They kill the only-son of the lord of the vineyard.

Jesus now asks what the lord of the vineyard will do to these husbandmen. All three Gospels record the question; but Matthew states that the people gave answer, while Mark and Luke state that Jesus Himself answered the question. The difficulty is readily explained. The people were so intent upon the narrative that, as Matthew states, they declared that the lord of the vineyard would punish the husbandmen. Then Jesus, as Luke says, endorsed this popular judgment and added to it: *He will come and destroy those husbandmen and will give the vineyard to others*. The scribes and Pharisees present recognized the main trend of the parable; for the Vineyard of the Lord is the House of Israel. In fear of the possible consequence and lesson, resulting from the transferring of the vineyard to others, they cry out: *God forbid*, i.e., may God forbid such punishment and giving over the vineyard to others!

The exclamation was, in a manner, an objection to the conclusion of the parable. And so Jesus continues as if answering an objection. He first quotes from Ps. cxvii, 22: *The stone which the builders rejected, the same is made the*



rejected, the same is made the head of the corner? (18) Every one that falleth upon that stone shall be bruised; and upon whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder. (19) And the chief priests and the scribes sought to lay hands on him in that same hour; and they feared the people, for they knew that he spoke this parable to them.

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*head of the corner.* Following upon the parable and being an argument to its conclusion, the "builders" who rejected the stone are the same as the "husbandmen" who rejected the only-son of the lord of the vineyard; and the only-son is the same as the stone, both of which are rejected. Jesus, the Messias, was rejected by the leaders of the people, who were the husbandmen of the Vineyard of the Lord and the builders of the worship of God. After His death and resurrection, Jesus becomes the Corner-stone, uniting both walls, Jew and Gentile, into a new and marvellous building of God (cf. Ac. iv, 11; Rom. ix, 33; I Pt. ii, 2). The second part of the reply (v. 18) declares that whoever takes offense at the humility and suffering of Jesus, takes occasion from this to reject Him, shall become objects of divine vengeance.

The scribes and Pharisees have no doubts but that Jesus had them and their nation in mind when He spoke the parable. For they sought to lay hands upon Him at that time, knowing that He spoke this parable to them. The application of the parable is an easy matter. Since the vineyard is a recognized figure for the People of God, the lord of the vineyard is God and His Only-son is Jesus Christ. The parable contains a brief survey of the past and also a prophecy. Jesus has especially in mind the husbandmen to whom the vineyard was let. These are the priests and leaders of the people. From them the vineyard is to be taken, because they have not cared for it in such a manner that God received the fruits He expected, because they have rejected the Only-son of God. The treatment accorded the

(20) And being on the watch, they sent spies who feigned themselves just, that they might take hold of him in his words, so as to deliver him up to the authority and power of the governor. (21) And they asked him, saying: Master,

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servants in the parable corresponds to the treatment accorded the prophets of old, who were the servants of God; and the treatment accorded the only-son corresponds to the attitude of the leaders of the people towards Jesus, whom they rejected and slew. Finally, the parable contains an answer to the original question put to Jesus. He is the Only and Beloved Son of God and teaches and works miracles by divine authority.

### *The Question of Tribute. XX, 20-26*

Parallels: Mt. xxii, 15-22; Mk. xii, 13-17. A comparison of the three accounts reveals this as one of the most carefully prepared attempts to entrap Jesus. The Pharisees dared not proceed openly against Jesus. So they sent "spies," as Lk. calls them. Mt. and Mk. state more definitely that these were disciples of the Pharisees and Herodians. Thus we find opposing parties united against Jesus. The Pharisees were opposed to the foreign rule and the payment of tribute; the Herodians recognized this rule. The question turns a political question into one concerning religion.

Jesus is approached by *spies who feigned themselves just*, i.e., they pretended that they were zealous for the service of God and that they were seeking the solution of a weighty question of conscience. Their purpose, however, is to entrap Jesus in His speech. It seems that they expected Him to declare the paying of tribute unlawful, for their purpose is stated: *To deliver Him up to the authority and power of the governor*. If He declared the tribute unlawful in order to retain His hold on the people, they would denounce Him to Pilate as guilty of treason. But if He should declare the tribute lawful, they could still denounce Him to

we know that thou speakest and teachest rightly, and thou dost not regard any person, but teachest the way of God in truth. (22) Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar, or not? (23) But he knowing their guile, said to them: Why tempt you me? (24) Show me a penny. Whose inscription hath it? They answering, said to him: Caesar's.

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the people as a traitor to the nation and as an enemy of religion.

The spies resort to flattery. What they say of Jesus is objectively true; but it is flattery, because they are not sincere and praise Jesus in order to throw Him off His guard. Their speech contains a four-fold flattery: (1) They give Him authority as a teacher; (2) They declare His doctrine correct; (3) They praise Him for truthfulness in speech; (4) They declare Him free of human respect in passing judgment. Their speech means: We present an important question to you, because you teach correctly and, in your teaching and judgment, are not swayed by fear of the Romans nor by favor of the people. They then ask whether it is lawful to give tribute to Caesar. They pretend to consult their spiritual welfare and the honor of God and religion. They ask not whether there is a law to this effect, but whether they can pay this tribute with good conscience.

Jesus declares that their attitude is hypocritical and that they have asked the question in order to entrap Him. He asks that they show Him a coin which was paid in tribute. The coin being produced, Jesus asks whose image and inscription it bore. To which they reply that it was Caesar's. *Caesar* is here a title, and not a proper name; for every Roman Emperor is called "Caesar" in the Scriptures. The coin was most probably one that bore the image of Tiberius, the reigning emperor, and the inscription: Tiberius Caesar Divi Augusti Filius Augustus Pontifex Maximus. They thus declare and admit that the money was coined in Rome,

(25) And he said to them: Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. (26) And they could not reprehend this word before the people; and wondering at his answer, they held their peace.

(27) And there came to him some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a resurrection, and they asked him, saying:

that it was Caesar's money. Its use in Palestine was clear evidence of the supremacy of Rome in the country. The coining of money has always been regarded as an exclusive right of a sovereign government, according to the ancient axiom: Wherever a king's money is current, there the people regard that king as their lord.

Jesus gives an answer which has always been regarded as the great principle of the relations between politics and religion and as the principle of Christian life: *Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.* There is great prudence in the answer of the Lord. He decides the question, but does not commit Himself on the dispute between the Pharisees and the Herodians. He bids them give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar. If the money be Caesar's and its use show that he was, *de facto*, the supreme authority in the land, then let them pay the tribute. But they must also render to God the things that belong to God, must not neglect their religious duties. Jesus distinguishes between man's allegiance to God and his allegiance to temporal rulers, declaring that both must be given by man. These duties do not necessarily conflict with each other.

### *Question of the Resurrection. XX, 27-40*

Parallels: Mt. xxii, 23-33; Mk. xii, 18-27. The question concerning the resurrection is raised by the Sadducees. They were the material-

(28) Master, Moses wrote unto us: If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he be childless, his brother shall take her to wife and raise up seed unto his brother. (29) There were therefore seven brethren; and the first took a wife, and died childless. (30) And the second took her to wife, and died childless. (31) And the third took her. And in like manner the seven; they left no children, and died. (32) Last of all the woman also died. (33) In the resurrection therefore whose wife shall she be? For the seven had her

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ists and free-thinkers of their day. They denied that there was a resurrection, that the soul is immortal, that angels and spirits existed. They likewise differed from the Pharisees on liturgical questions and on the interpretation of the Law. The fact that they now endeavor to embarrass Jesus shows that all parties, though antagonistic to each other as the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians, made common cause against Jesus.

The Sadducees first call attention to the Law of Moses, freely quoting Dt. xxv, 5, which enacted that when a man's brother die without issue, he should take his brother's widow to wife and raise up seed to his brother. The insinuation is that every good Israelite will observe this Law, if circumstances made it obligatory. They seem to emphasize that Moses wrote this Law, wishing to show that the Scriptures themselves placed an obstacle in the way of the resurrection of the body. They propose the case of seven brothers, each married successively to the same woman because each preceding brother had died childless. Finally the woman also died. They could have used an example of two brothers who had married the same woman, according to the law quoted; but they increase the number of husbands in order to increase the difficulty. Then comes the question: *In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife shall she be? For all seven had her to wife.* Each of the seven had married her legitimately and by reason of the command of the law. All

to wife. (34) And Jesus said to them: The children of this world marry and are given in marriage. (35) But they that are accounted worthy to attain that world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. (36) For neither can they die any more; for they are equal to the angels; and are the children of God, being children of the resurrection. (37) But that the dead rise again, Moses also showed at the Bush, when he called the Lord the

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have an equal right to her; if she be given to one, she belongs to the others by the same right. Since she cannot be given to one without violating the right of the others and since she cannot be given to all at the same time, there cannot be a resurrection. The objection was due to ignorance of the Scriptures and of the power of God, as Matthew states. It was based upon a false supposition that man's life in the next world continues as it was on earth.

Jesus answers in a two-fold manner. He first removes the false and materialistic idea concerning the state of man in the next life. *The children of this world* designates the present life. Here on earth men and women marry in order to preserve and propagate the human race. This is the primary purpose of marriage, according to divine institution. Different conditions shall prevail in the next life. It should be noted that Jesus here speaks only of the resurrection of the just. This sufficed to explain the proposed doctrine and answer the difficulty of the Sadducees, who also must have had the resurrection of the just in mind. Jesus taught that all men shall rise from the dead, but not all in a glorified state to receive rewards (cf. Mt. xxv, 32 f.; Jo. v, 28-29). After the resurrection, there shall be no marriage.

Jesus gives the reason why there shall be no marriage in the next life: *For neither can they die any more*. Marriage was instituted for the sake of children; children are born for the sake of succession; succession is necessary because of

death; and where there is not death, there is no need of succession; where there is no succession, there is no need of birth; where there is no birth, there is no marriage (St. Bede). The human race was not created in its full and complete number, but must be propagated through marriage. In the resurrection, mankind shall rise in the full and complete number, determined by God. Since the number is complete and cannot be decreased, there is no need of propagation; and this need being removed, there is no marriage. This is further set forth: *They are equal to the angels*. The angels were created in a fixed number and immortal; hence, there is no need of any act on their part for the conservation or propagation of their species. They are immune from even a desire to increase their number. After the resurrection man will, as it were, be clothed with this same immunity. Not only will they not marry, but will not have any desire for marriage. Furthermore: *They are children of God*. They are raised to a new life through the resurrection, a life that differs entirely from the present life; for the resurrection is a genus of generation unto immortality of the body. As such, the just are called children of God in a higher and more excellent sense.

Jesus shows that they knew not the Scriptures; and from the Scriptures proves the immortality of the soul and, consequently, the resurrection. Jesus draws His argument from Exodus. He could have quoted many other passages of the Old Testament, in support of the doctrine of immortality and the resurrection, v.g., Job xix, 25-26; Dan. xii, 2; Is. xxvi, 19-21; Wis. iii, 1-4. He quotes from one of the books of Moses, because the Sadducees had based their argument on one of the books of Moses. He wishes to show them that Moses did not deny the resurrection. The quotation is said to be *at the Bush*, i.e., in that portion of the books of Moses which treats of the burning bush, viz., Exodus, chapter vi. According to the Sadducees, there was

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God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. (38) Now he is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live to him.

(39) And some of the scribes answering, said to him: Master, thou hast spoken well. (40) And after that they dared not ask him any more questions.

no resurrection because man absolutely ceased to be at death. Why then, asks Jesus, should God solemnly declare that He is *the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?* God is here said to be the God of existing beings; for if the Patriarchs had ceased to exist, He is no longer their God. *For He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.* The "dead" must be here understood in the sense of the Sadducees, i.e., as non-existing beings. The Patriarchs were dead in the ordinary and usual sense of the word, i.e., they had passed out of this life. But they were not dead in the sense of the Sadducees, i.e., they had not returned into nothingness, for their souls lived on. *All live to Him*, be they as yet in this mortal life or be they translated to the other life beyond the grave. In respect to us, men cease to live; in respect to God, men do not cease to live.

The scribes could not refrain from admiring the answer of Jesus; and they declared that He had answered well. Though the Sadducees made common cause with them, their defeat gave them joy; for this same question was disputed among them, as we learn from the Talmud. The praise of the scribes was an expression of delight at the defeat of their enemies rather than an approval of Jesus.

#### *The Son of David.* XX, 41-44

Parallels: Mt. xxii, 41-46; Mk. xii, 35-37. Mt. has the more detailed account. According to the first Gospel, Jesus asked the Pharisees what they think of the Christ and whose son they thought the



(41) And he said to them: How do they say that the Christ is the son of David, (42) and David himself said in the book of Psalms: The Lord said to my Lord: Sit thou at my right hand, (43) till I make thy enemies thy footstool?

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Messias should be. They answered: David's. Lk. omits this introductory question.

*How say they that the Christ is the son of David?* This question may be understood as referring to the statement of the Pharisees, as given in Matthew, or it may be understood impersonally: "How is it said?" All Israel recognized that the Christ, the Messias, was to be a descendant of David. This is one of the leading thoughts in the prophecies (cf. Is. xi, 1; Jer. xxiii, 5; Ez. xxxiv, 23; Amos ix, 11; Agg. ii, 22-24); is frequently mentioned in the New Testament (v.g., Mt. xii, 23; Jo. vii, 42), and in Jewish literature (v.g., Ps. Sol. 17, 5; Tal., Berak. 5). It is folly to say that Jesus wished to deny that the Messias should be a descendant of David. Jesus permits Himself to be addressed as the "Son of David" (cf. Mt. ix, 27; xv, 22; Mk. x, 47; Lk. xviii, 38) and He is declared to be a descendant of David, according to the flesh (cf. Mt. i, 1; Lk. i, 32; Ac. xiii, 22; Rom. i, 3; II Tim. ii, 8). It is folly to say that Jesus here wishes to deny that He was a descendant of David. From what follows, the question asks in what manner the Messias is the "Son of David," or how this title must be understood.

Jesus calls attention to what David himself said of the Messias. He quotes the first verse of Ps. cix. The Psalm was attributed to David and applied to the Messias, both in the rabbinical writings and in the New Testament (v.g., Ac. ii, 34; I Cor. xv, 25; Hebr. i, 13). And Jesus approves of this and confirms it. *The Lord said to my Lord*, i.e., God the Father spoke to the Messias, the Christ. The *right hand* is the symbol of power; and to sit

(44) David therefore calleth him Lord; and how is he his son?

(45) And in the hearing of all the people, he said to his disciples: (46) Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk

at the right hand of God is to have part in the honor and glory and power of God. The making of his enemies his footstool signifies their complete subjection to him. The doctrine contained in the Psalm is that the Messiah possesses divine prerogatives, is the Lord of all, the Son of God (1-3); that He is an eternal Highpriest, a King, who overcomes all His enemies (4-7).

Jesus now asks: *David then calleth him Lord; and how is he his Lord?* Jesus cannot wish to oppose the prophecies, cited above; neither can He wish to deny His own descent from David, according to the flesh. He desires to remove the incomplete and erroneous idea concerning the Messiah. There was no error in saying that the Messiah was a descendant of David, according to the flesh; but there was an error in considering Him as mere man, as a mere carnal descendant of David. Everything in the Psalm quoted indicates that David, speaking by divine inspiration, declares the superiority of the Messiah over himself; and it is also clear that he speaks of a superiority which is greater than that which raises one man above the other. The Messiah is more than man. Though taking flesh and blood from one who descended from David (and therefore a Son of David), He is the Lord of David because He is God.

### *Denunciation of the Scribes. XX, 45-47*

Cf. Mk. xii, 38-40. This constitutes a part of our Lord's last public discourse. Mt. gives the denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees at great length, the entire 23rd chapter being devoted to it. Lk. xi, 39-52 and xiii, 34-35 record two former occasions when Jesus issued similar warnings.

in long robes, and love salutations in the market places, and the first seats in the synagogues, and the chief places at feasts; (47) who devour the houses of widows, making a pretense of long prayers. These shall receive the greater damnation.

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The denunciation is pronounced in the hearing of all the people, for its purpose was to warn them against the scribes and the Pharisees. Their pride is shown in that they wore such clothing as was a mark of dignity and attracted attention, that they sought for reverent and respectful salutations and the first places at religious and social functions. (Cf. above, xi, 43.)

Their avarice and hypocrisy was shown in that they *devour the houses of widows, making a pretense of long prayers*. The Sacred Scriptures represent widows as especially deserving of compassion (v.g., Ex. xxii, 22), and declare robbing them the mark of the most shameless greed (v.g., Jer. vii, 6; Is. x, 2). The scribes obtain the money and substances of widows under the pretext of piety. They *shall receive the greater damnation*, because they not only deprive the defenceless of their sustenance, but also do this under the pretext of piety.

## Chapter XXI

(1) And looking on, he saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. (2) And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in two mites. (3) And he said: Verily, I say to you: This poor widow hath cast in more than they all; (4) for all these of their abundance cast into the offerings of God, but she of her want hath cast in all the living that she had.

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### *The Widow's Mite. XXI, 1-4*

After the denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus left the Temple. The incident, recorded here and in Mk. xii, 41-44, took place as Jesus was leaving.

The *treasury*, here spoken of, was not the place where the gifts were stored but the place where they were offered; for everyone, including women, had access to it. Josephus relates that, in the inner court of the Temple, there was a room or hall containing thirteen trumpet-shaped chests, into which people could cast their offerings. To this hall came the rich and the poor. Among them was a widow who offered *two mites*, the smallest Greek coins, equal to the Roman *quadrans*, or farthing.

Jesus declares that the widow had made a greater offering than all the rich; and the reason is: *For all these of their abundance cast into the offerings of God, but she of her want hath cast in all the living that she hath.* She gave more than the rest because she gave all that she had, while the others gave of their abundance. Jesus does not condemn

the offerings of the rich; in fact, He states that they made the offering to God. He placed the offering of the widow above them because of the sacrifice connected with it. They had given much, but made little sacrifice; she had given little, but made great sacrifice. God does not regard the gift, but the intention of the giver; and the gift is not judged by its greatness but by the means of the giver (cf. II Cor. viii, 12).

*The Eschatological Discourse. XXI, 5-36*

This discourse is also found in Mt. xxiv and xxv and Mk. xiii. Mt. xxv, while forming a part of this discourse, has no parallel in Lk. The discourse has been the object of controversy and attack; and it is well to clear up the matter at the outset.

Those who deny the supernatural, deny that Jesus delivered this discourse. Their denial is without other foundation than the supposition that prophecy is impossible; and so needs no refutation. On the other hand, some declare that Jesus imagined He was soon to return and judge the world; and so accuse Him of error. This view is contrary to the life and teaching of Jesus. During His Public Ministry and after, Jesus opposed the idea of an immediate return (cf. Lk. xiii, 18-19; xix, 11 f.; Mt. xxii, 1-14; xxviii, 19-20). He established a Church and declared that this Church was to continue His work. Secondly, Jesus did not make a necessary connection between the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Coming. In Lk. xvii, there is a prophecy of the Second Coming without any mention of Jerusalem; and in Lk. xix, 42-44 a prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem without any mention of the Second Coming. Thirdly, there are texts in the present discourse which show that the Second Coming is not to follow immediately upon the destruction of Jerusalem (v.g., Mt. xxiv, 14; xxiv, 48; Mk. xiii, 10; Lk. xxi, 24).

Jesus spoke of both events in the same discourse because the apostles asked concerning both and because the first is a faint picture of the second and a proof that the second shall also be fulfilled. It should also be remembered that this is a prophetic discourse treating of two related subjects. Prophecies treating of similar events, or several

(5) And some speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said: (6) These things which you see, the days will come in which there shall not be left here a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down. (7) And they asked him, saying: Master, when shall these things be? and what shall be the signs when they shall begin to come to pass?

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events forming one whole, often merge and intertwine these events. In other words, such prophecies lack perspective and contain a certain amount of obscurity which is cleared up when part of the prophecy has been fulfilled.

Commentators disagree as to which part of the discourse refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and which part to the Second Coming. Reserving the reason to the explanation of the text, we present the following division of Lk., with parallels from Mt. xxiv and Mk. xiii: (1) Introduction, 5-7 (Mt. 1-3; Mk. 1-4). (2) General History of the World and of the Church, 8-19 (Mt. 4-14; Mk. 5-13). (3) The Destruction of Jerusalem, 20-24 (Mt. 15-20; Mk. 14-18). (4) The Second Coming, 25-28 (Mt. 29-31; Mk. 24-27). (5) Admonitions to Vigilance, 29-36 (Mt. 32-51; Mk. 28-37).

INTRODUCTION (5-7). The occasion for the discourse was the remark of the apostles concerning the beauty and strength of the Temple. Luke gives no indication of time; but Matthew and Mark state that Jesus was leaving the Temple. With its various courts and colonnades, built of marble and overlaid with gold, the Temple was one of the most magnificent structures of ancient times (Tacitus, Hist. 5, 7; Jos., Ant. 15, 11 and J. W. 5, 5). In answer, Jesus foretells the days when *there shall not be left a stone upon a stone*. For the fulfillment of this prophecy it is required and is sufficient that the Temple be reduced to ruins. This was accomplished in the year 70.

When the apostles were out on the Mount of Olives, as we learn from Matthew and Mark, they ask when this shall

(8) And he said: Take heed that you be not seduced; for many will come in my name, saying: I am he; and: The time is nigh. Go you not after them. (9) And when you shall hear of wars and seditions, be not terrified; these things

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come about: *When shall these things be? And what shall be the signs?* From a comparison of the three accounts we learn that they asked concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Coming of Jesus. Jesus answers both questions, gives them signs but not the date of the two future events.

HISTORY OF THE WORLD AND THE CHURCH (8-19). Some commentators refer this section to Jerusalem, others to the Second Coming, and others to both events. We choose the third view, with the restriction that what is here said does not constitute *signs* of any particular event. It is intended to give a summary of the condition of the world and the Church, down to the end of time. Jesus removes all idea of a glorious, conquering temporal empire, an idea which was still entertained by the apostles. The reason for thus understanding this part of the discourse, was already given by St. Chrysostom: There always were and always will be wars, famines and earthquakes; but what has always been the case, *cannot be a special sign of a future event*. Jesus does not call them "signs"; and we shall find, in the discourse, indications that they are not to be so understood. However, since Jesus spoke of these things in the present discourse, we may look upon them as reminders that the world, with all its pomp and glory, shall pass away.

The first feature of the future is the appearance of false prophets, foretold after the manner of a warning against being seduced, led astray, by them. *Many will come in my name, saying: I am he; and: The time is nigh*. Certain men will claim that they come in the name of Jesus, declar-

must come to pass first; but the end is not yet presently. (10) Then he said to them: Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. (11) And there shall be great earthquakes in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and there shall be terrors and great signs from heaven. (12) But before all these things, they will lay their hands upon you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors, for my name's sake. (13) And it shall hap-

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ing themselves to be the Messiah and predicting that the end of the world is imminent. Matthew and Mark add that these men shall lead many astray. As already stated, Jesus refers to all imposters and false prophets, ancient, modern, and yet to come. The Christian should pay no attention to these men and give no credence to their predictions.

After the establishment of the Kingdom of God and the preaching of the Gospel of Peace, there shall still be wars and dissensions. But these are not properly "signs" of the end, for Jesus adds: *But the end is not yet presently*. Jesus states in greater detail that the future shall see great wars between nations and kingdoms; to which are added the natural calamities of earthquakes, pestilences and famines, and *terrors and great signs from Heaven*. This last clause would seem to prove that Jesus is here including all times; for the terrors and signs from Heaven are later said to be signs of the Second Coming. All the calamities, here spoken of, came upon the world before the destruction of Jerusalem; but they do not seem to fulfil the requirements of the text. Moreover, they are not said to be *signs* of the destruction of that city.

Another feature of the history of the Church is persecutions. The opening clause of this prediction, *before all these things*, makes it clear that the preceding refers to all times, and not only to the time preceding the destruction of



pen unto you for a testimony. (14) Lay it up therefore in your hearts not to meditate beforehand how you shall answer; (15) for I will give you a mouth and a wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to resist or gainsay. (16) And you shall be betrayed even by parents and brethren, kinsfolk and friends; and some of you they will cause to be put to death. (17) And you shall be hated by all men for my name's sake. (18) But a hair of your head

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Jerusalem. While the apostles and the Christians suffered persecutions from the beginning, yet these persecutions took place *after* and *not before* the calamities, cited from history and used to prove that the preceding refers in a special manner to the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus again tells the apostles that His Church shall be persecuted throughout the ages to come. These persecutions shall *come for a testimony*. Persecution suffered is a testimony to the loyalty and fortitude of the persecuted; persecution overcome by the Church is a testimony to the cause of Christ, her Divine Founder.

Jesus promises to aid His faithful disciples in the time of persecution (14-15). They are not to be troubled when called upon to bear witness to their faith, for He will aid them (cf. above, xii, 11-12). In the present text, *mouth and a wisdom*, most probably means speech and the form of speech, respectively. A wisdom will be given them which their adversaries cannot resist. The picture is drawn out more fully; the Christians shall be betrayed by their parents and brethren, by their kinsfolk and friends. This may refer to persecutions arising from within, due to apostates and heretics; or it may still refer to persecution of Christians by their pagan relatives and friends. Jesus closes with another promise which should encourage the Christian and free him from excessive fear. *A hair of your head shall not perish* is a proverbial expression for special care and pro-

shall not perish. (19) In your patience you shall save your souls.

(20) And when you shall see Jerusalem being encompassed about with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is at hand. (21) Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; and those who are in the midst of

tection of God in the midst of dangers. By their constancy and perseverance under adversity, they shall save their souls: *In your patience you shall save your souls*. Thus, to the promise of protection is added the promise of reward.

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM (20-24). There is no difficulty in this section of Luke, for the transition is clearly marked. The difficulty arises from Matthew and Mark, where the two events merge into one general theme. This merging of the events, or a second general prediction concerning the future, begins at verse 21 in Matthew and at verse 19 in Mark. Hence the reason for the division given above.

A *sign* is now given; and it is well to note the difference with which Jesus now speaks. *When you shall see . . . then know*, which was not said in regard to the wars, etc., mentioned in the preceding section of the discourse. And this difference must not be overlooked; for it makes the difference between "events of the future" and "signs of future events." Verse 20 is not parallel to Lk. xix, 43-44. There was given a description of the destruction of the city; here Jesus points out something that shall precede the destruction and give warning of the disaster to come. The war was prosecuted by Titus with four Roman Legions and a large number of auxiliary troops from the provinces. The campaign began in Galilee and Perea and, from these points, was gradually transferred to Judea and the territories about Jerusalem. Some time before Titus appeared before the walls of Jerusalem, Cestius Gallus led an army within sight

her depart out; and those who are in the countries not enter into it. (22) For these are the days of vengeance, that all things may be fulfilled that are written. (23) But woe to them that are with child and to them that suckle in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land and

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of the city and began the seige (Jos. J. W. 2, 19). Thus was Jerusalem *being encompassed about with armies*, but not yet completely cut off. Jesus tells the apostles that there is no hope for the city; and that, when they see the Roman armies closing in on Jerusalem, they shall know that the city is doomed.

Mt. and Mk. give another sign, "The abomination of desolation, standing in the Holy Place." This is not something which preceded the present discourse, nor something which took place after the fall of Jerusalem. Neither is it to be understood of the presence of the Roman armies in the country. At the time Jesus spoke, the Roman armies were not only in Palestine but Pilate and a Roman garrison were in the city itself. We understand it of the profanation of the Temple, the Holy Place, through the excesses of the Zealots (cf. J. W., 4, 3). This took place some time before Titus laid actual siege to the city; took place when Jerusalem "was being encompassed."

When they see these two things coming to pass, they are to flee to the mountains, to a place inaccessible to the Roman armies; those who are in the city, are not to remain; and those in the country round about should not enter the city, as relying upon its strong position. *For these are the days of vengeance*, which Jerusalem shall not escape. Moses had announced the punishment that comes upon those who rebel against God and His Law (cf. Dt. xxiii, xxix, xxxii). This particular punishment was foretold in Is. xxxiv, 8; Jer. xlv, 10; Dan. ix, 26; Zach. xi, 1-3. Verse 23 does not contain a condemnation of motherhood; it is a commiseration for mothers and expectant mothers. For them the hardships

wrath upon this people. (24) And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captives into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

(25) And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon earth, distress of nations, in

and sufferings of the time shall be doubly great. In public calamities all must bear something; and while the Christians saved their lives, they lost their possessions and were subjected to great difficulties and sufferings, caused by hasty flight and life in strange surroundings.

Those who do not escape from the city shall be slain with the sword, or sold into captivity. This prophecy was literally fulfilled (cf. Jos., J. W., 6, 9). The prophecy concerning Jerusalem ends with the declaration that the city *shall be trodden down by the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*. The Romans reduced the city and Temple to ruins; and in their place built a pagan city and a pagan temple. "The times of the Gentiles" is generally understood to mean the time for preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles (cf. Rom. xi, 25-26). This last sentence shows that the Second Coming is not contemporaneous with the destruction of Jerusalem.

It is at this point that Lk. omits part of the discourse, which is given in Mt. xxiv, 21-28 and Mk. xiii, 19-23. The omitted portion is to be considered as a general prediction regarding the false prophets and their persecutions before the destruction of Jerusalem as well as before the Second Coming.

**THE SECOND COMING (25-28).** The Second Coming shall be preceded by great signs in nature. The signs in the sun, moon and stars is described by Matthew and Mark: The sun shall be darkened, the moon shall not give her light, the stars shall fall from Heaven. Upon the earth,

perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves; (26) men fainting for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the world; for the powers of heaven shall be moved. (27) And then they shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with great power and majesty. (28) But when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads; for your redemption is at hand.

(29) And he spoke to them a parable: See the fig tree, and all the trees. (30) When they now shoot forth, you

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distress shall reign among the nations and confusion shall be apparent in nature, so that there shall be great fear and expectation among men. In these words, Jesus describes the breaking up of nature. His words are partly metaphorical, and the meaning is that the present system of the heavens and the earth shall be changed. The light of the sun shall be withheld and, as a consequence, the moon will not shed her light; and the stars will seem to be falling from the heavens. It is a picture of nature in convulsions, the death agony of the world (cf. II Pt. iii, 10; Is. xxiv, 1).

These disturbances in nature are the only *signs* given in the present discourse, for Jesus continues: *Then they shall see the Son of Man coming in a cloud, with great power and majesty.* It is the Second Coming of Jesus (cf. Dan. vii, 9-13). The faithful then living, and the Church as a whole, are bidden not to fear. Rather *lift up your heads, for your redemption is at hand.* With the breaking up of the present order and with the Second Coming, persecution, tribulation and sin shall cease.

VIGILANCE (29-36). Jesus had foretold the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. Both events are times when He comes in judgment. He does not give the date for the latter event because He desires that all Christian generations learn the lesson and be prepared for judgment. What occurs at the death of each individual is a

see and know that summer is nigh. (31) So you also, when you shall see these things come to pass, know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. (32) Amen, I say to you: This generation shall not pass away till all things be fulfilled. (33) Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall

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prelude to the end and the judgment of the entire human race. Hence, Jesus admonishes all to be on their guard and to pray at all times.

Jesus uses the figure of the fig-tree. When the trees shoot forth their leaves and fruit, we know that the summer is nigh. So also, when we see these things come to pass, we are to know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. The 32nd verse is obscure. *This generation shall not pass away, till all things be fulfilled.* The various explanations of this saying are: (1) "This generation" refers to the contemporaries of Jesus. The two events foretold in the discourse form one moral whole, the beginning of which was witnessed by some who were then living. (2) It refers to the Jewish race which has not, and will not, pass away before the end of time. (3) The reference is to the Christians, the Church, as represented in the apostles. (4) Jesus is speaking of the entire human race. These are attempts to explain "this generation"; and it would seem that the first is more probable. Others taking the context into consideration, and understanding "this generation" as referring to mankind in general, give the following explanation. Jesus had just spoken of the fig-tree giving a sign of what is to come, and now He declares the certainty with which these events shall come to pass. Which is then emphasized still more by the following sentence: *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.* The present heavens and earth, which we behold with our eyes, shall pass away and give place to a new heavens and a new earth, but words of Jesus shall remain forever true. It is easier for mankind

not pass away. (34) And take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly. (35) For as a snare shall it come upon all that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. (36) Watch you therefore, praying at all times, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things and to stand before the Son of Man.

(37) And in the daytime he was teaching in the temple; but at night, going out, he abode in the mount that is called Olivet. (38) And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, to hear him.

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to pass into extinction and for the heavens and the earth to be destroyed than that there be untruthfulness in His words.

Jesus warns us to take heed lest we be entangled in the things of the world and the day come suddenly (cf. Lk. xvii, 26-30). Despite the signs given, the end shall come suddenly, unexpected by those who heed not the words of Jesus. It shall come as a snare upon all (cf. Eccls. ix, 12). In reference to the death of each, the application is the same as for the Second Coming; no man knows the day nor the hour.

Therefore the final admonition is given to watch and pray at all times. Man should be on his guard, keeping himself from too great attachment to the things of the world. Together with the watchfulness is to be united continual prayer for the aid and grace of God. This for two reasons: To escape the evils of those days and to be able to stand with confidence in the presence of Christ.

### *Summary of the Last Days. XXI, 37-38*

The last two verses of the present chapter are a summary of the last days of Jesus in Jerusalem. During those days

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He preached in the Temple, retiring to the Mount of Olives for the night (cf. Mt. xxi, 17; Mk. xi, 19). It appears from Jo. xviii, 2 and Lk. xxii, 39 that Jesus was accustomed to retire to the Garden of Gethsemane, which was near the foot of the Mount.



## Chapter XXII

(1) Now the feast of unleavened bread, which is called the pasch, was at hand. (2) And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might put him to death; but they feared the people. (3) And Satan entered into Judas who

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### *Judas and the Rulers. XXII, 1-6*

Cf. Mt. xxvi, 1-16 and Mk. xiv, 1-12. The accounts relate the deliberations of the chief priests and scribes and the manner in which Judas came to their aid.

*The feast of unleavened bread* is also called *Azymus* and *Pasch* in the Gospels. The feast received the first name because the Jews were forbidden to keep or eat leavened bread during the days of the feast. "Azymus" is an anglicized Greek word meaning "unleavened bread." The feast was properly called the "Pasch" or "the Passover"; the former being derived through the Greek and Latin from "Pesach" and the latter being its translation. The feast was celebrated each year, from the evening of the 14th to the 21st of Nisan, the first month of Spring. It was instituted and celebrated in memory of the delivery of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt (cf. Ex. xii, 1-27; Lev. xxiii, 5-8). When this day drew nigh, the chief priests and the scribes sought means to put Jesus to death. They did not deliberate whether or not He should die, for this was already decided (cf. Jo. xi, 47-53). The only obstacle in their way was the people, who seemed much attached to Jesus. They conclude, according to Matthew and Mark,

is called Iscariot, one of the twelve. (4) And he went and discoursed with the chief priests and the captains, how he might betray him unto them. (5) And they were glad; and they covenanted to give him money. And he promised. (6) And he sought an opportunity to deliver him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

(7) And the day of unleavened bread came, on which it

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that they could persuade the people, once they had Jesus in their power.

Help comes to them from Judas. When the Gospel says *Satan entered into Judas*, we are not to understand that he was possessed by a devil and so not responsible for his act. The same statement is made in Jo. xiii, 27. The Evangelists thus express their horror for the deed of Judas, show forth his malice and confirmation in evil. Judas came either during or after a meeting of the enemies of Jesus. *The captains* are the chief men of the Temple guard. Judas consults with members of the Great Council and with the rulers of the Temple. *They were glad*, for they had not expected anything so favorable to their plans; they were glad that one of the close followers of Jesus had turned traitor; they were glad because the defection of Judas made it easier for them to apprehend Jesus. Judas strikes a bargain with them. They promise to pay him money, 30 pieces of silver (Mt.), the value of a slave (cf. Ex. xxxi, 32). Judas promises to betray Jesus into their hands quietly and unnoticed by the people. He is eager to fulfil his part of the bargain.

### *Preparation of the Paschal Supper. XXII, 7-13*

Cf. Mt. xxvi, 17-19; Mk. xiv, 12-16. According to the Law, the paschal lamb, often called simply "the Pasch" as here, was to be slain on the 14th day of Nisan. In the evening, when the 14th ended and the 15th began, the paschal lamb was eaten. The first day of unleavened bread was the day before the Feast proper.

was necessary to sacrifice the pasch. (8) And he sent Peter and John, saying: Go, and prepare for us the pasch, that we may eat. (9) But they said: Where wilt thou that we prepare? (10) And he said to them: Behold, as you enter the city there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him into the house into which he entereth. (11) And you shall say to the master of the house: The master saith to thee: Where is the guest-chamber, where I may eat the pasch with my disciples? (12) And he will

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In order to make ready the paschal lamb for the Supper Jesus sends the two foremost apostles, Peter and John. In reply to their question as to the place where they are to prepare the supper, Jesus gives them instructions which show forth His super-human knowledge. It is to be understood that these instructions were given early in the morning (Thursday) to allow time for them to make preparations. Though the city was full of strangers and many would be obtaining water for the day, Jesus knows that the two apostles will meet but one man carrying a pitcher of water; or perhaps, they will meet a man who is known to them. They are to follow this man, who seems to be a servant, and request the use of his master's house. It follows from the manner of the instructions that the master of the house was a disciple, or at least a friend of Jesus. The apostles going, met the man, followed him, obtained use of the upper-room and there prepared all that was necessary for the Paschal Supper. Ancient tradition identifies this room with the upper-room of Ac. i, 13, and the house with that mentioned in Ac. ii, 1 and xii, 12.

### *Beginning of the Paschal Supper. XXII, 14-18*

The fact of the Paschal Supper is given in all the Gospels. Lk. alone makes mention of the beginning of the Supper. In order to under-

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show you a large upper room furnished; and there prepare. (13) And they going, found as he had said to them; and they made ready the pasch.

(14) And when the hour was come he sat down, and his twelve apostles with him. (15) And he said to them: With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer. (16) For I say to you that, from this time, I will not eat it till it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. (17) And having taken the chalice, he gave thanks, and said:

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stand the course of events, it is well to remember that, according to the ancient Jewish ritual, four cups of wine mixed with water were presented to all present during the ceremony attending the Paschal Supper: (1) The "cup of dedication" which was passed to all before the table was set; (2) The "cup of Exodus," presented after the table was set and accompanied by the relating of the liberation from Egypt and the explanation of the meaning of the Feast; (3) The "cup of benediction," presented after the paschal lamb was eaten and accompanied by prayers of thanksgiving; (4) The "cup of Hallel," so called because it was accompanied with singing of psalms of praise.

The Gospel narratives indicate that only the apostles took part with Jesus in this Paschal Supper. As they take their places, Jesus declares that it is with great desire that He eats this Pasch with them. He had not as yet celebrated the Pasch with them; for on the two previous visits to Jerusalem for the Feast, they had not yet been called, and Jesus remained in Galilee during the third Pasch of His Public Ministry. The desire of Jesus is partly explained by the circumstance that He is here acting as the head of the little household. The main reason is given by Jesus Himself: *I say to you that from this time I will not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.* The Paschal Supper was a type or figure of the endless feast which the just enjoy in Heaven; it was also a type of the Holy Eucharist, the Paschal Feast of the New Law, which Jesus celebrates with

Take, and divide it among yourselves; (18) for I say to you: I will not drink of the fruit of the vine till the Kingdom of God come.

(19) And taking the bread, he gave thanks, and broke, and gave to them, saying: This is my body, which is given

the faithful. Jesus ardently desires that the realities take the place of the figures, that the perfect New Law, the Kingdom of God, fulfil the Old.

The chalice mentioned in verse 17 is not the one which Jesus consecrated into His Blood. Most probably it is the second of the ceremonial cups mentioned above. This seems to follow from the circumstances that the lamb and the other dishes were present when Jesus presented the chalice, that the words accompanying it makes reference to the meaning of the Paschal Supper, and that the words of Jesus resemble the rite which accompanied the presentation of this chalice. The words of verse 18 have the same meaning as those of verse 16: Jesus will not again celebrate the Paschal Supper until the reality, foreshadowed by it, be celebrated in the Kingdom of God, the Church

### *Institution of the Holy Eucharist. XXII, 19-20*

Cf. Mt. xxvi, 26-28; Mk. xiv, 22-24. St. Paul also gives an account of the Institution, as He received it from the Lord, in I Cor. xi, 23-25.

The Holy Eucharist was instituted after the eating of the paschal lamb. Mt. states: "While they were at supper"; Mk.: "While they were eating"; Lk.: "After He had supped." The words of Mt. and Mk. may be understood as indicating that they were at table, and the words of Lk. that the Supper proper had ended.

In the consecration of the bread, all four accounts have the words: *This is my body*. The pronoun is demonstrative and declares merely the presence of something and besides the presence, nothing else. "This" signifies neither the

for you. This do in remembrance of me. (20) In like manner, the chalice also, after he had supped, saying: This chalice is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

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bread not the Body of Christ, but calls attention to something as present. "Is" unites the subject and predicate of the sentence and declares their identity. So that the words of Jesus mean: What I hold in my hands and am about to give you is my body. No other meaning can be given to the words without doing violence to the text. The Body of Jesus, present under the appearances of bread is said to be *given for you*, i.e., for your salvation. This expression of Luke, together with the words of St. Paul: "Which is broken for you," designate that there is offered up the Body of Jesus in expiation and satisfaction.

The chalice most likely contained wine mixed with water, as was customary at the Paschal Supper. *In like manner, the chalice also, after He had supped*, i.e., as He had done with the bread, so also with the chalice. The reference to the time, "after He had supped," refers also to the bread; both consecrations took place after the Paschal Supper. *This is the chalice, the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you*, declares that in the chalice is the Blood of Jesus, which is the Blood of the New Testament. The Old Testament was instituted and consecrated by the blood of victims offered in sacrifice (cf. Ex. xxiv, 8). So too, the New Testament is instituted, consecrated and sealed in the Blood of Jesus present in the chalice. The words of Luke are equivalent to those given in Matthew and Mark: "This is my blood of the New Testament."

The act by which Jesus consecrated the bread and wine into His Body and Blood was to be repeated by the apostles. For Jesus commands them: *This do in remembrance of me*, i.e., do what I have done to renew and keep alive the memory

(21) But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. (22) And the Son of Man indeed goeth, as it hath been determined; but woe to that man by

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of me. As the Paschal Supper was instituted in memory of the liberation from Egypt, so is the Holy Eucharist instituted in memory of man's liberation from sin through the death of Jesus. The Holy Eucharist is not a mere memory of Jesus, but it is celebrated in His memory. "Do this" refers to what Jesus had done, it gives the object of the command; "in memory" states the motive and reason, not the substance of the commanded act.

### *Jesus Foretells the Betrayal. XXII, 21-23*

Cf. Mt. xxvi, 21-25; Mk. xiv, 18-21; Jo. xiii, 10-30. The Fourth Gospel has the fullest account, from the first allusion to the traitor to his departure from the company of the apostles. Lk. has the briefest account. The accounts have led to divergent opinions as to the exact course of events. We will give what seems the most natural and obvious sequence.

Jo. xiii, 10-11 and 18-19 make allusion to the traitor, and verse 21 plainly declares that one of the apostles shall betray Jesus. Matthew and Mark record this same statement and the question of the apostles regarding the identity of the traitor. Jesus answers: "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish." Since this statement did not point out one particular person, as subsequent actions show, the words have the same meaning as those of Luke: *The hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table.* The meaning is that one of the twelve, one intimately associated with Jesus, one who celebrates with Him the feast of joy and peace, shall betray Him.

*The Son of Man goeth indeed, as it hath been determined.* Jesus points to His death as the divine plan for the redemp-

whom he shall be betrayed. (23) And they began to inquire among themselves which of them it was that should do this thing.

(24) And there was also strife among them, which of them should be the greater. (25) And he said to them: The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and they that have power over them are called benefactors. (26) But you shall not be so; but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is the leader, as he that serveth.

tion of mankind, as foretold in the prophecies. His sufferings and death should not cause them to waver in faith. Jesus went freely to His death; Judas, of his own free will, betrayed Him into the hands of His enemies. Jo. xiii, 23-28 relates how Jesus gave him a sign and how Judas left the supper-room.

#### *Strife Among the Apostles. XXII, 24-30*

While the apostles were in the supper-room, they disputed as to which of them should be the greater. Jesus takes occasion to teach them the relations that should exist between superiors and subjects in the Kingdom of God. Temporal rulers, he tells them, *lord it over them*, i.e., use their power solely to display their authority and impose their own will upon their subjects. Their rule has little or no regard for the rights and welfare of the subjects. Yet such men are called "benefactors"; they give themselves this title and demand it of others. In the Kingdom of God it must be different: *You shall not be so; but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is the leader, as he that serveth.* In the Kingdom of God, the ruler should not domineer over his subjects, should not be bent on merely enforcing his will. His rule should be such that he deserves to be called a benefactor of his subjects.



(27) For which is greater, he that sitteth at table or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you as he that serveth. (28) And you are they who have continued with me in my temptations. (29) And I have appointed to you a kingdom, as my Father hath ap-

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To the pride and arrogance of worldly rulers Jesus opposes and teaches the virtue of humility; and the manner in which He does it is significant. The words of Jesus show that He is addressing those who occupy a prominent and exalted position in the Kingdom and that they are not all equal. For He says: "He that is the greater." And to them He gives the rule that they are to practice humility in a degree corresponding to their position and dignity. With humility He joins charity. They possess power and authority and are to exercise it. But in the exercise of this authority they should always seek the welfare of their subjects, and their rule should be a real service to the ruled.

Jesus places before them His own example of humility and self-sacrificing service. He calls their attention to the fact that the one who sits at table is greater than the one who serves the table, and declares that He is among them as one who serves. Jesus was the greater, He was their Lord; and they recognized this. Yet, His entire work showed that He became as the least among them, His life being given to their service.

Jesus adds, as another motive, the rewards for humble and faithful service in the Kingdom of God. *Temptations*, here refers to all the trials and difficulties and sorrows which Jesus encountered during the Public Ministry. The apostles had persevered with Him thus far. His commendation of their loyalty contains an exhortation to persevere, as is seen from the promise: *I have appointed to you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* As the Father had ordained that He, the Messiah, should be Lord in the King-

pointed unto me, (30) that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and may sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

(31) And the Lord said: Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath

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dom of God, so does He ordain that they share His authority in the Kingdom. They shall also be made partakers of His joy, signified by the figure of sitting at table with Him in the Kingdom. And finally, He promises that they shall possess judicial authority, sitting upon thrones and judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Most commentators rightly consider this as including all mankind, not only the believing members of Israel (cf. Mt. xix, 28). The apostles shall, in some manner and subordinate to Christ, co-operate in the judgment of the world.

*The Prayer for Simon Peter. XXII, 31-32*

Jesus speaks of trials awaiting all the apostles, but He addresses Simon Peter alone. The repetition of his name gives emphasis to the statement and lays stress upon the seriousness of the matter. The text contains three sentences: The first regards the trials which await the apostles, the second contains the prayer for Simon Peter, and the third declares his mission.

The trials of the apostles shall be occasioned by Satan. The object of Satan's desire is plural (*ὅμᾱς*). He desires to have, not only Simon Peter, but all the apostles, that he might dispose of them at will and destroy the work of Jesus. By means of attacks and persecutions, described under the figure of sifting wheat, Satan hopes to disturb and agitate them in such a manner that they waver in faith and fall away. To these attacks against all the apostles Jesus opposes His prayer for Simon Peter: *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* All were in danger, but Jesus prays

desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. (32) But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thou, when once thou art converted, confirm thy brethren.

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for Simon Peter. The action of Jesus is unusual. He certainly was solicitous for all; and yet, after stating that all were in danger, He prays for one alone. His words cannot be satisfactorily explained unless the prayer for Simon Peter includes prayer for the rest and unless the steadfastness of Peter is a guarantee that the others shall not fail. In other words: Simon Peter is the head, upon whom and from whom the faith of the others depends. Jesus prays that Peter may not fail in faith, not that he may not sin. He did sin that same night, but his faith did not fail.

The prayer of Jesus is efficacious, the faith of Simon Peter shall not fail. Therefore, he is given the commission: *And thou, when once thou art converted, confirm thy brethren.* The "conversion" is most probably a reference to the sin of Simon Peter; and the reference makes clear that Jesus' prayer was not intended to mean that he would not sin. Peter's commission is to confirm his brethren. Jesus does not state in what he is to confirm them, but the context makes it clear that he is to confirm and strengthen them in the faith. Satan's attacks were directed against the faith of the apostles, for Christ's prayer has the result that Simon's faith shall not fail. It is clear that Simon is to confirm his brethren in the faith; and that he may fulfil this commission, his own faith shall not fail.

### *Jesus Foretells the Denial. XXII, 33-34*

Cf. Mt. xxvi, 31-35; Mk. xiv, 27-31; Jo. xiii, 36-38. The accounts, while agreeing in substance, differ in some details. It seems more probable that Jesus twice made the prediction: In the supper-room (Lk. and Jo.) and on the way to Gethsamani (Mt. and Mk.).

(33) And he said to him: Lord, I am ready to go with thee both into prison and to death. (34) And he said: I say to thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day till thou thrice deniest that thou knowest me.

(35) And he said to them: When I sent you forth without purse, and wallet, and shoes, did you want anything? But they said: Nothing. (36) Then he said to them: But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet;

Peter declares his willingness to go with Jesus to prison, even unto death, if necessary. The reason for the declaration is given in John. The reply of Jesus to this declaration of loyalty is that Peter shall deny Him thrice on the very day that he makes the declaration. Peter's sin will not consist in a loss of faith. He will not profess his faith, declaring that he does not know Jesus; and he will do this on three separate occasions. The sin shall be committed before dawn. Pliny places the "cock-crow" in the fourth night-watch, i.e., about 3 A.M.

### *Struggles Destined for the Apostles. XXII, 35-38*

Jesus reminds the apostles of the mission upon which He had sent them (cf. above, ix, 1-9). He had sent them forth without preparations for their journey, commending them to Providence and the charity of their hearers. In reply to His question, they declare that they had then wanted nothing.

Jesus had spoken of the trials and dangers awaiting them. He now indicates how great these perils shall be, and admonishes them to be prepared for them. All commentators agree that *purse*, *wallet*, *sword*, in this text, are not to be taken literally. And this is certain concerning the sword; for this is manifest from the example of Jesus and the apostles and from their admonitions. Jesus foretells perils and admonishes them to take means to meet and overcome

and he that hath none, let him sell his coat and buy a sword. (37) For I say to you that this that is written must be fulfilled in me: And with the wicked he was reputed. For that which concerneth me hath an end. (38) But they said: Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said to them: It is enough.

(39) And going out, he went, according to his custom, to the mount of Olives. And the disciples also followed him. (40) And when he was come to the place, he said to

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them. The weapons they are to use are spiritual and not material.

The reason for the danger is that now the prophecy of Isaiah is to be fulfilled: *And with the wicked he was reputed* (cf. Is. liii, 12). This prophecy was literally fulfilled when Jesus was placed on the level of the wicked at His trial and in His death. The apostles misunderstood the words of Jesus and called His attention to the two swords which they have. The reply of Jesus: *It is enough*, does not mean that the two swords suffice, but is a dismissal of the subject.

### *Jesus in Gethsemani. XXII, 39-54*

Cf. Mt. xxvi, 30-56; Mk. xiv, 32-50; Jo. xviii, 1-12. The first three Gospels record the Agony and the Arrest of Jesus; the Fourth Gospel records only the Arrest. The differences in the four accounts will be noted in the explanation of our text.

St. Luke again calls attention to the custom of Jesus of retiring to the Mount of Olives. He refers to the garden merely as "the place." Matthew designates it as a country-place, John as a garden, and Mark as a farm; all of which amount to the same thing. The name given the Garden is *Gethsemani*, derived from *gath shemen*. This garden was situated east of Jerusalem, across the brook Cedron, at the foot of the Mount of Olives.

them: Pray, lest you enter into temptation. (41) And he was withdrawn away from them about a stone's cast; and kneeling down, he prayed, saying: (42) Father, if thou wilt, remove this chalice from me; but yet not my will, but thine,

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THE AGONY (40-46). When Jesus arrived at the garden, He admonishes the apostles: *Pray, lest you enter into temptation*. This admonition seems to have been addressed to all the apostles when they came to the garden. From Matthew and Mark we learn that Jesus left eight of them at the entrance and took with Him into the garden Peter, James and John. Since Luke omits mention of the choice of these three witnesses to the agony, it also seems probable that the *stone's cast* was the distance Jesus retired into the garden, i.e., from one hundred to two hundred feet. Here Jesus is prostrate in agony, and falling on His knees, prays for deliverance. Luke condenses the account of the prayer and agony. Matthew and Mark distinguish three stages in the agony, during which Jesus prays the selfsame prayer and after which He arouses the apostles from sleep.

There is a slight difference in the Gospels on the wording of the prayer. Since Jesus prayed and prayed again, He may have made these changes; but the prayer always remained the same. For the identity of a prayer is judged by its sense and not by its words. In all the accounts we find the same invocation of the Father, the same petition for deliverance, the same submission to the will of the Father.

Jesus prays for a removal of the chalice, i.e., of His suffering and death, but only on condition that it is possible; and the possibility rests solely with the will of the Father. Jesus thus prays with His human will and nature, which is in complete harmony with the Divine Will. He did not wish that the Divine Will and decree be changed. He accepted it. But in accepting, the human will and human nature expressed its natural desire of being freed from suf-

be done. (43) And there appeared to him an angel from Heaven, strengthening him. (44) And being in agony, he prayed more earnestly. And his sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down to the ground. (45) And when he

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fering and death. The prayer of Jesus is one complete prayer. The first part expresses the desire of nature; the second part subjects all to the Divine Will. It is not a mere passive submission, but a positive acceptance of the chalice of suffering.

The Father sends Jesus comfort through an angel. The appearance of the angel was real and objective; and it is contrary to the wording of the text to suppose an invisible presence. The angel comes before the end of the agony, as is plainly stated in the text. The angel strengthens Jesus in body and soul. Most probably he reminded Jesus of the effects of the sufferings He was to endure, the glory of God and the salvation of souls. This strength and comfort could have been supplied by His Divine Nature. It was not, because Jesus wished to show how completely He subjected the human nature to the Will of God; likewise to show that the Father gave such aid as human nature would require, if left to itself.

*Being in agony, He prayed more earnestly.* Jesus did not cease from prayer because of His agony; rather He became more earnest. The intensity of the prayer, the greatness of the agony, the resistance to the agony which filled His soul, caused a bloody sweat to break forth from His body. The obvious sense of the text is that Jesus sweat blood, that there issued from His body sweat consisting of blood and water. An attempt has been made to explain the text as a figure, meaning that great drops of sweat trickled down from the Savior's face. This is contrary to the interpretation of the Fathers, both Greek and Latin. It is also contrary to the text itself. The use of figurative speech is

rose up from prayer and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping from sorrow. (46) And he said to them: Why sleep you? Arise, pray, lest you enter into temptation.

(47) As he was yet speaking, behold, a multitude; and he that is called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them and drew near to Jesus to kiss him. (48) And Jesus said to him: Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?

entirely out of place here; and there is no reason for comparing sweat to blood.

While Jesus is in agony, the apostles slept. Three times He came and roused them from sleep. Luke mentions only the last coming of Jesus, after the agony. He rouses them and bids them arm themselves against temptation by watchfulness and prayer.

THE ARREST (47-54). All the accounts state that Jesus was speaking when the multitude arrived. From Mt. xxvi, 46 and Jo. xviii, 4 it is rightly inferred that Jesus went towards the entrance of the garden to meet His foes. The multitude, as is learned by comparing the accounts, was made up of chief priests, members of the Great Council, members of the Temple-guard, scribes and Pharisees, servants of the priests and Roman soldiers.

At the head of the multitude was Judas. On the way to the garden it had been agreed that Judas point out Jesus by a kiss. The sign of friendship and love was chosen, very likely, that Judas might approach as a friend and hide his treachery. It was needed for the Roman soldiers who were to take Jesus prisoner and who did not know Him. Jesus permits Judas to approach and consummate his treachery. At the same time He impresses upon the fallen apostle the greatness of his crime. Judas has been a friend and an apostle, especially chosen. He abuses the privilege of a friend; and the one he thus betrays is the Son of Man, the Messiah.



(49) And they that were about him, seeing what would follow, said: Lord, shall we strike with the sword? (50) And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. (51) But Jesus answering, said: Suffer you thus far. And when he had touched his ear, he healed him. (52) And Jesus said to the chief priests, and the captains of the temple, and the ancients, that were come against him: Are you come out as it were against a thief with swords and clubs? (53) When I was daily with you

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St. John records the miracle by which Jesus rendered His enemies powerless for a time. When they arose and moved to take Jesus prisoner, the apostles ask whether the time has come for striking with the sword. They probably remember the words spoken at the last supper and think that the time has come when they are to use the sword. Simon Peter, without waiting for an answer, drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest. It is St. John who gives us the name of the one who struck the blow in defense of Jesus and also the name of the servant.

Jesus first answers the question of the apostles: *Suffer you thus far*. The general sense of the words is that they are not to offer resistance. "Thus far" would mean "even this," even to my being made a prisoner. And having rebuked the apostles, as Matthew states, Jesus cured the servant, thus repairing the injury done by Peter and giving another proof of His power.

Jesus addresses the chief priests and the captains of the temple. He does not directly address the soldiers, because they would not have been present except at the request of the former. Jesus declares that He is not a fugitive from justice, that He has nothing to hide or conceal. He spoke daily in the Temple and they had not laid hands upon Him. They had not done so, because their act could not be justified in the presence of the people and because His hour had

in the temple, you did not stretch forth your hands against me; but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. (54) And apprehending him, they led him and brought him to the high priest's house. But Peter followed afar off.

(55) And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the court and were sitting about it, Peter sat in the midst of

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not yet come. *This is your hour*, i.e., the time for their apparent triumph; and their hour coincides with that of the powers of darkness.

When Jesus had finished speaking, they bound him and led Him to the house of Caiphas. Jo. xviii, 13 states that they first brought Jesus before Annas, who questioned Him concerning His doctrines and disciples. The traditional view, which is more in keeping with the texts, is that Annas and Caiphas occupied the same house at that time. Jesus is led to the house of Caiphas, but is first brought before Annas. The night trial is omitted by Luke.

#### *Peter's Denial.* XXII, 55-62

Cf. Mt. xxvi, 67-75; Mk. xiv, 66-72; Jo. xviii, 15-18 and 25-27. The place is the courtyard of the high priest's house, the time is during the trial of Jesus by the Great Council.

The guards and the servants remained in the courtyard during the proceedings; the soldiers very likely returned to their barracks. A fire was enkindled in the courtyard, for the night was chilly.

Some difficulty is found in the accounts, though they agree in essentials. All accounts are in perfect agreement as regards the first denial. This denial, provoked by a maid servant, led to a series of attacks on Peter. These attacks were mainly in two groups, each separated by an interval during which he was not noticed. It is not necessary that each account give all or the exact words spoken on each occasion. Since many were present and many may have spoken to Peter on each occasion, the Gospels may mention different persons without contradicting one another. It is also certain that more was said than is recorded in the Gospels, for Peter's condition is discussed and he is

them. (56) And a certain maid, seeing him sitting at the light and having earnestly beheld him, said: This man also was with him. (57) But he denied, saying: Woman, I know him not. (58) And after a little while, another seeing him, said: Thou also art one of them. But Peter said: Man, I am not. (59) And after the space of about an hour, another man affirmed, saying: Of a truth, this man was also

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recognized by his speech. The fact that he was recognized and denied he knew the Lord on three different occasions, can embrace repeated statements by him and his questioners and by different persons.

**THE FIRST DENIAL (56-57).** This was occasioned by a maid servant, the portress who admitted John and Peter into the courtyard. She recognizes Peter as he sits by the fire and declares that he was with Jesus. She is certain because she has seen him enter and knew that he did not belong to their company. Peter is emphatic in his denial of knowledge of Jesus. To which may be added the thought contained in Matthew and Mark: So far am I from knowing Him, that I do not even understand what is meant by your remarks.

**THE SECOND DENIAL (58).** The second denial takes place some time after the first and is again occasioned by a maid servant. Matthew and Mark state that the women began to talk of Peter to the bystanders; they speak to the entire company present. Hence, it is easily seen that there is no contradiction when John speaks of several and Luke of another man as addressing Peter. These others take up the suggestion of the women and accuse him of having been with Jesus. Again Peter denies; and he confirms the denial with an oath (Mt.).

**THE THIRD DENIAL (59-60).** This denial occurred after an interval of about an hour. During this time the status of Peter was discussed. The men are now positive

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with him, for he is a Galilean. (60) But Peter said: Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, as he was yet speaking, the cock crew. (61) And the Lord turning, looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said: Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. (62) And going out, he wept bitterly.

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of his identity. They declare that he is a Galilean, having come to this conclusion from his manner of speech (Mt. and Mk.). Some claim that he is a Galilean and therefore a follower of Jesus. Another declares that he was in the garden with Jesus (Jo.). Peter denies that he knows Jesus, denies that he is a Galilean, denies that he was in the garden of Gethsemani.

PETER'S CONVERSION (61-62). Two facts led to his conversion. *The cock crew*, the hour predicted by Jesus had come and Peter becomes conscious of his disloyalty and the contradiction between his present act and his previous protestations. *The Lord turning, looked on Peter*. Some think that Jesus was visible from the courtyard as He stood in the presence of the Council. Others, with greater probability, hold that the trial was ended and that Jesus was being led from the Council room to the prison. Passing through the courtyard, Jesus paused and fixed His gaze upon the unfortunate apostle; and that look made Peter realize the injury he had done the Master and the grief his sin had caused. His conversion is immediate; for he immediately quits the company, his eyes filled with the tears of sincere repentance.

### *Jesus is Mocked. XXII, 63-65*

A similar account is given in Mt. xxvi, 67-68 and Mk. xiv, 65. According to these, it would seem that the denial occurred during the mockery; but according to Lk. it occurred before the mockery. How-

(63) And the men that held him mocked him and struck him. (64) And they blindfolded him and smote his face, and asked him, saying: Prophecy, who is he that struck thee? (65) And reviling him, they said many other things against him.

(66) And as soon as it was day, the ancients of the people, and the chief priests and scribes met together. And they brought him into their council, saying: If thou be the Christ,

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ever, Mt. and Mk. speak of the members of the Great Council, Lk. speaks of the servants.

No sooner had the Council declared Jesus guilty and worthy of death than He was subjected to all manner of abuse, ill-treatment and contempt by the members of the Council. From the Council, He is led to another part of the house to be held in custody till morning. It is of this period that Luke speaks. The servants who constituted His guard amused themselves by imitating the example of their masters.

### *Morning Session of the Council. XXII, 66-71*

Mt. xxvii, 1-2 and Mk. xv, 1 merely state that the Council met again in the morning. Lk., who has omitted mention of the night session, gives a more detailed account.

Though meetings of the Council were usually held after the morning sacrifice, the Gospels state that this meeting was held very early, as soon as it was day. At this meeting are present the ancients of the people, the chief priests and the scribes — all members of the Council. They wish that the entire Council pass judgment; and they desire to give their proceedings the semblance of legality, since trials were forbidden at night. They also desire to consult on the mode of bringing Jesus before Pilate.

tell us. (67) But he said to them: If I shall tell you, you will not believe me; (68) and if I shall ask you, you will not answer me. (69) But from henceforth, the Son of Man shall be seated on the right hand of the power of God. (70) Then they all said: Art thou then the Son of God? And he said to them: You say that I am. (71) And they said: What further need have we of any testimony? For we ourselves have heard from his own mouth.

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They now proceed to ask Jesus whether He is *the Christ*, i.e., the Messiah. It was their desire that He repeat His declaration of the preceding night before the whole Council. Jesus shows that He is aware of their intentions. Events of the night had shown that they were not willing to believe His testimony. He had solemnly and under oath declared that He was the Messiah and the Son of God; and their answer was to declare Him guilty of blasphemy. He likewise declares that they are unwilling to examine His claims, that they do not wish to enter into any discussion nor give reason for their attitude and action. Nevertheless, He makes the declaration: *The Son of Man shall be seated on the right hand of the power of God.* (Cf. Ps. cix, 2.)

The Council understood that Jesus spoke of Himself and claimed a power and a dignity such as exalted Him to the throne of God. They proceeded to a further question, all speaking at once: *Art thou then the Son of God?* It cannot be said that the expression used here is merely another term for the Messiah. For there was no reason to repeat a question that had already been answered. Moreover, the form of the question indicates a progression of thought, that something is added to the claim of being the Messiah. Finally, to claim that one was the Messiah did not constitute blasphemy among the Jews. The reply of Jesus, *You say that I am*, is an affirmation: It is as you say; or, What you say is true, for I am the Son of God. Upon this reply, the

Council declared that there is no further need of testimony and that they had sufficient evidence to warrant the death sentence. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah and the Son of God; He proved His claim true by His many miracles. He made the same claim before the Council; and for this reason they declared Him worthy of death.

## Chapter XXIII

(1) And the whole company of them rising up, led him to Pilate. (2) And they began to accuse him, saying: We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he is Christ the King.

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### *First Trial Before Pilate. XXIII, 1-7*

Cf. Mt. xxvii, 11-14; Mk. xv, 1-5; Jo. xviii, 28-37. Mt. and Mk. summarize and give the outcome of the trial. Lk. gives the precise charges made against Jesus. Jo. records especially the attitude of the Council and Pilate's examination of Jesus.

*The multitude* here mentioned are the members of the Great Council and their attendants. The common people were not present at the meeting of the Council, and are not mentioned until later. Thus, through the treachery of Judas, the leaders of the people were able to apprehend Jesus by night, pass sentence on Him at a mock trial, and deliver Him over to the Roman authorities as a criminal before the people were aware of what had taken place. The reason for bringing Jesus before Pilate was that the Romans had taken away from the Jews the right to inflict the death penalty (cf. Jo. xviii, 31).

St. John records how the members of the Council refused to enter the house of Pilate and how they sought to have him pass sentence without holding a trial. St. Luke gives the accusation, made at the demand of Pilate. Their deceit is manifest. On the previous night they had brought forth witnesses and failed to find Jesus guilty of any crime; now



(3) And Pilate asked him, saying: Art thou the king of the Jews? But he answering, said: Thou sayest it. (4) And Pilate said to the chief priests and the multitude: I find no cause in this man. (5) But they were more earnest, saying:

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they declare that they know Him guilty, having no intention of proving the charge. They had declared Jesus guilty of a crime against God; now they declare Him guilty of a crime against the State. *Perverting our nation* means that He is guilty of sedition, the falsehood of which Pilate certainly knew. *Forbidding to give tribute to Caesar* is an accusation as false as the first (cf. Lk. xx, 25). Had it been true, they would have rallied to Him, for it was they who held that the tribute was unlawful. *Saying that he is Christ the King* is partly true and partly false. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah; and He also claimed to be King, the Head of the Kingdom of God. But under the circumstances and as an accusation before the Roman Procurator, the statement is false. In their mouth, it meant that Jesus claimed to be a king in opposition to the Emperor. Even though Pilate knew or suspected the accusation to be false, he could not ignore it. He therefore subjects Jesus to an examination (cf. Jo.). The first question that Pilate puts to Jesus is: *Art thou the King of the Jews?* The question is not put in scorn or irony. Acting as judge, he inquires whether Jesus makes such claims as would bring Him into opposition to the Emperor, and guilty of treason. The Fourth Gospel gives a detailed account of the examination and Jesus' explanation of His Kingship.

After the examination, Pilate declares: *I find no cause in this man*, i.e., I find Him innocent of the charges brought against Him. But now the mistakes, faults and injustice of Pilate begin. Instead of liberating one whom he has declared innocent, he listens to further accusations. Nothing new is brought forward; but the accusers of Jesus become

He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee even unto this place. (6) But Pilate hearing it, asked if the man were of Galilee. (7) And when he understood that he was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him away to Herod, who was also himself at Jerusalem in those days.

(8) And Herod seeing Jesus, was very glad; for he was a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard many things concerning him; and he hoped to see some miracle done by him. (9) And he questioned him in many words.

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more vehement, and Pilate pays heed. The mention of Galilee suggested to him a way out of the difficulty. When he learned that Jesus was of Galilee, he sent Him to Herod who was then in Jerusalem. There was no need for transferring the case to another tribunal, for Jesus was apprehended and accused in the territories of Pilate; and Herod had no jurisdiction in Jerusalem. Though Pilate's act seems to be an act of deference to Herod, his real motive was to free himself from the necessity of passing sentence. He was convinced of the innocence of Jesus, yet feared to set Him free in opposition to the demands of the Council.

#### *Jesus Before Herod. XXIII, 8-12*

This Herod, to whom Jesus is sent, is Herod Antipas. He had put St. John to death, was troubled at the preaching of the apostles, had desired to see Jesus, and spread rumors that he had a mind to kill Him (cf. Lk. ix, 7-9; xiii, 31-32). Through the act of Pilate, Herod was constituted judge; but his whole interest is in being amused and entertained. He had heard of the miracles of Jesus and now hoped that Jesus would do some wonderful works to please him and gain his good-will. To all the questions of Herod, Jesus remains silent. His silence is a condemnation of Herod, of his life

But he answered him nothing. (10) And the chief priests and scribes stood by, earnestly accusing him. (11) And Herod with his soldiers set him at nought, and mocked him, putting on him a white garment, and sent him back to Pilate. (12) And Herod and Pilate were made friends that same day; for before, they were at enmity with each other.

(13) And Pilate calling together the chief priests, and the magistrates, and the people, (14) said to them: You

and of his present mode of action. In the meantime, the chief priests and scribes accuse Jesus of many things.

Finding that he made no progress in obtaining the gratification of his curiosity, Herod and his soldiers set Him at nought. They derided Him as powerless because He worked no miracle, as ignorant because He did not answer Herod, as a fool because He did not defend Himself against the accusers (St. Bede). In mockery, Herod clothes Jesus with a white garment and sends Him back to Pilate. This was done to ridicule His claim to kingship and to mark Him as a fool. Yet, this act is a declaration of innocence of any crimes; and Pilate so interprets it. We have no knowledge of the cause of the enmity which existed between Pilate and Herod. On this day, each had made a show of respect and deference to the other and were reconciled.

### *Second Trial Before Pilate. XXIII, 13-25*

Cf. Mt. xxvii, 15-26; Mk. xv, 6-14; Jo. xviii, 39-40. The latter merely mentions that the people demanded the release of Barabbas; the first three Gospels give a fuller account of the trial.

Pilate now deliberated not only with the leaders of the people but with the people themselves. This is the first explicit mention of the presence of the common people. They had either been attracted by the proceedings or had come to request the release of a prisoner. Pilate gives a

brought unto me this man, as one who perverteth the people; and behold, I, having examined him before you, find no cause in him touching those things wherein you accuse him. (15) No; nor yet Herod. For he sent him back to us, and behold, nothing worthy of death is done by him. (16) I will chastise him therefore, and release him. (17) (Now of necessity he was to release unto them one upon the feast day.) (18) But the whole multitude together cried out, saying: Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas;

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résumé of the case. He tells them that he has found Jesus innocent of the charges brought against Him. He tells them that he referred the case to Herod, who also found Jesus innocent. Then follows a curious and unjust declaration: *I will chastise Him therefore, and release Him.* Why chastise one who has been found innocent of all crime? Pilate wished to satisfy his own conscience and also the demands of the enemies of Jesus. Pilate's attempt to win the release of Jesus is a crime against justice; and it is also a sign of his fear and of his willingness to make concessions.

CHRIST AND BARABBAS (17-19). Verse 17 seems to be an interpolation of the text, made to explain what follows. There was a custom of releasing a prisoner at the Feast of the Pasch; and the people were given the right to ask for the release of any one they desired. It seems that the custom was of Jewish origin and respected by the Romans (Jo. xviii, 39). Barabbas is described in the Gospels as a notorious criminal, guilty of seditions, robbery and murder. Matthew states more plainly that Pilate gave the people choice between Christ and Barabbas. He hopes to obtain the release of Jesus by popular demand. Again he resorts to unworthy and unjust means, giving over the power of judge to the people, placing Jesus in the criminal class and making an innocent man the object of judicial clemency.

Aroused by members of the Council, to whom they looked

(19) who, for a certain sedition made in the city and for murder, was cast into prison. (20) And Pilate spoke again to them, desiring to release Jesus; (21) but they shouted, saying: Crucify him! Crucify him! (22) And he said to them a third time: Why, what evil hath this man done? I found no cause of death in him. I will chastise him therefore, and let him go. (23) But they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he be crucified; and their voices prevailed. (24) And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. (25) And he released unto them him, who for murder and sedition had been cast into prison, whom they desired; but Jesus he delivered up to their will.

(26) And when they led him forth, they laid hold on one

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for guidance, the people call for the release of Barabbas and the death of Jesus. They exceeded their rights; for they had the right to ask for the release of a prisoner, not for the condemnation of any one. Pilate endeavors to reason with them, asking what should be done to Jesus, asking what wrong He had done. But they will not listen; they cry out the more for the death of Jesus, and their voices prevailed. Pilate had yielded too far, had shown his lack of courage and sense of justice. The mob feels its power and refuses to give way. Pilate releases Barabbas and condemns Jesus to death. Jo. xix, 4-16 records the formal sentence of death, passed after Jesus had been scourged.

### *The Way of the Cross. XXIII, 26-32*

Cf. Mt. xxvii, 31-34; Mk. xv, 20-23; Jo. xix, 17. The latter merely records that Jesus went forth to Calvary bearing His cross.

SIMON OF CYRENE (26). Those condemned to death by crucifixion were obliged to carry their cross to the place of execution. It is generally held that Jesus, through weakness caused by ill-treatment, mental anguish, physical

Simon of Cyrene, coming from the country, and laid the cross upon him to carry it after Jesus. (27) And there followed him a great multitude of people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. (28) But Jesus turning to them, said: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. (29) For be-

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pain and loss of blood, was unable to carry the cross. The executioners seize upon a man named Simon and force him to take the cross. *Coming from the country* very likely means that Simon came from work in the fields; and it is also thought that this exchange of the cross took place near the entrance to the city. The wording of the text shows that the cross was removed from Jesus and placed upon Simon, who then walked after Jesus. Simon was the father of two well known sons, Rufus and Alexander (Mk.), and the former is identified with the Rufus of Rom. xvi, 3. Cyrene, the home of Simon was the capital of Lybia. Many Jews lived in that city (Jos., Con. Ap. 2, 4), and many of them came to Jerusalem, where they had a synagogue (Ac. vi, 9). Simon either had come to the city for the Feast or had established his home there.

**THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM (27-31).** A great multitude followed the procession to Calvary. Among them were certain women who wept in compassion for Jesus. From the address of Jesus it follows that these women were of Jerusalem and not of Galilee. Jesus bids them rather to weep for themselves and for their children. He does not reprove them because of their sympathy for Him, but tells them that there is another cause for lamentation. Sin is the cause of His sufferings and also a cause for sorrow and lamentation. Jesus sees in these women the mothers of a guilty people; and He addresses them as representatives of this people.

They should rather weep for themselves and their chil-

hold, the days are coming wherein they will say: Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the breasts that have not suckled. (30) Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us; and to the hills: Cover us. (31) For if they do these things in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry. (32) And there

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dren because of the crime here committed and because of the punishment that shall follow it. The punishment of the ungrateful and sinful city shall be so great that, when it overtakes them, the people shall declare the childless woman blessed. The various phrases used by Jesus all have the same meaning; the repetition is made for the sake of emphasis. Elsewhere in the Scriptures a numerous progeny is declared as a blessing, while the childless wife was looked upon with pity and even contempt. But in those days of suffering, mothers will wish that they had borne no children and the childless will be considered blessed. The reason is that the misery and suffering of children adds to that of the mother. Jesus applies to those times the words of Osee x, 8: *Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us; and to the hills: Cover us.* As used here, the words imply that the sufferings and tribulations shall be so great that the people shall wish sudden death to overtake them and free them. The reason for the punishment and its greatness is given in verse 31: *For if they do these things in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry?* Parallels in thought are Prov. xi, 31 and I Pt. iv, 18. In the Scriptures, the just man is compared to the fruitful, green tree (cf. Ps. i). If we make "they" personal, the meaning is: If the Romans thus treat one whom they consider innocent, what shall they do to those whom they consider guilty? Since the expression is proverbial, it seems more probable that "they" should be taken impersonally. Then the meaning is: If I who am innocent suffer thus because of sin,

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were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be crucified.

(33) And when they were come to the place which is called the Skull, there they crucified him and the robbers, one on the right hand and the other on the left. (34) And

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what shall be the punishment of those who are guilty of sin?

THE MALEFACTORS (32). These two robbers who were crucified with Jesus are mentioned by all the Gospels. From St. Luke we learn that they formed part of the procession to the place of execution.

### *The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus. XXIII, 33-49*

Cf. Mt. xxvii, 33-56; Mk. xv, 20-41; Jo. xix, 17-37. Each of the accounts has its own proper matter, certain facts or details not mentioned by the others.

THE CRUCIFIXION (33-34). The place where Jesus was crucified was called "the Skull." The other Gospels give the Aramaic name for the place, *Golgotha*. This name was translated by the Evangelists, and by the Latin Vulgate. In the latter, the name is *Calvarii locus*, from which name is derived the English, *Calvary*. Of no weight is the view that the place was so named because skulls of criminals there executed were strewn over the place; for it is doubtful whether there were regular places of execution in ancient times and the Jews would not have allowed human remains to lie about in a public place near the city. The place received the name because it was higher ground, a mound-shaped formation which was supposed to resemble a human skull. The place is not called a mountain, nor even a hill, in the Gospels.

*They crucified Him* is the simple, yet comprehensive statement of the Gospel. Jesus was fastened to the cross by four nails, one through each hand and foot. Such was



Jesus said: Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. But they dividing his garments, cast lots.  
(35) And the people stood beholding, and the rulers with

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the usual mode of crucifixion; such are the most ancient representations in Christian art; and such seems to be required by the fact that not a bone of the Lord's body was broken (Jo. xix, 36). Before sentence of death was carried out, it was customary among the Jews, as we learn from the Talmud, for certain women to give the condemned some kind of narcotic to deaden the pain. Jesus was offered wine mixed with myrrh ( Mt. and Mk.). This is not to be confounded with the vinegar given Jesus as He hung upon the cross.

**FIRST WORD OF JESUS (34).** In the midst of His sufferings, Jesus prays for His executioners. He pleads with the Father to forgive them; and He adds, as an excuse and motive for forgiveness, that they know not what they do. The extenuating cause given applies in varying degrees to those present. The Roman soldiers were merely carrying out the commands of their superiors, knowing nothing of the wickedness of the deed. The common people were misled by their superiors into believing that Jesus was an enemy of their nation. The chief priests, acting from envy and hatred, labored under a culpable ignorance.

**DIVISION OF THE GARMENTS (34).** According to the custom of the times, the garments of those condemned were given to the executioners. From John we learn that there were four soldiers who made the division of our Lord's garments and that the garments were divided into four parts. From Mark it seems probable that lots were cast to determine which part each soldier should receive. The seamless tunic formed a fifth portion of His garments; and not wishing to rend it, the soldiers cast lots for it.

**MOCKERY OF JESUS (35-36).** Though the Gospels

them derided him, saying: He saved others; let him save himself, if he be the Christ, the elect of God. (36) And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar, (37) and saying: If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. (38) And there was also a superscription over him (written in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew): This is the King of the Jews.

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record this jeering and taunting of Jesus in a single sentence, it is rightly considered to have extended over a long period. The Gospels give a summarized account. The rulers and the people jeer at His miraculous powers. His deeds of mercy are made the object of ridicule; He saved others, they say, and is now unable to help Himself. They make this seeming inability to aid Himself a reason for deriding His claim to be the Christ and pleasing to God. According to Matthew and Mark they taunt Him with the false testimony brought forth at the night trial, declare that they will believe in Him if He descends from the cross.

St. Luke is the only one who mentions that the soldiers joined in this mockery. The offering of vinegar is here mentioned by anticipation, for it was certainly a mockery. The vinegar was offered Jesus shortly before He died.

**TITLE OF THE CROSS (38).** According to Roman custom, the reason for a man's execution was proclaimed by a herald who went before the condemned man or was written on a tablet and carried before him. Pilate followed the second method, writing the cause for the crucifixion on a tablet which was placed over Jesus on the cross. The inscription was written in Hebrew, the language of the Province, in Greek, the world-wide language, and in Latin, the official language of the government. The wording is slightly different in the Gospels, but the sense is the same. The title declared that Jesus is put to death because He is the Messiah. Pilate thus unwittingly gave testimony to

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE 385

(39) And one of the robbers who was hanged, blasphemed him, saying: If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us.

(40) But the other answering, rebuked him, saying: Dost thou not even fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation? (41) And we indeed justly; for we receive due reward of our deeds. But this man hath done no evil.

(42) And he said: Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom. (43) And Jesus said to him: Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.

(44) And it was now about the sixth hour; and there

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the truth. John records the futile attempt of the rulers to have the wording of the title changed.

THE TWO THIEVES (39-43). One of the thieves crucified with Jesus joined in the mockery of Him. But the other rebuked him, coming to the defence of Jesus. He asks his companion whether he does not even fear God, before whom he is about to appear. His question, resolved into a statement, means: Since you are undergoing the death penalty, are about to die, your action shows that you have no fear of God. The penitent thief then acknowledges his own guilt and the innocence of Jesus. They suffer justly, paying the penalty for their crimes; but Jesus has done no evil. The rebuke and confession are marks of repentance for past sins.

Turning to Jesus, the thief asks that he be remembered. The Kingdom, in which he asks to be remembered, can mean only a kingdom in the next life, for he knew that both he and Jesus were to die. His petition, humble and confident, is an acknowledgment of Jesus as King and Messias. In turn, Jesus promises him more than he had asked. He promises to bring him that day to *Paradise*, the place of rest where the souls of the just were gathered, waiting for the Messias to come and lead them to Heaven.

THE DARKNESS (44-45). From the sixth to the ninth

was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour, (45) the sun failing; and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. (46) And Jesus crying with a loud voice, said: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. And saying this, he gave up his spirit.

(47) Now the centurion seeing what was done, glorified

hour, i.e., from noon until three o'clock, darkness covered the land. The better opinion restricts this darkness to Palestine for the following reasons: 1. The term *land*, γῆς, is generally used in the Scriptures to refer to Palestine in distinction to the *world*, κόσμος; 2. The darkness signified the moral and spiritual state of those concerned in the death of Jesus and had reference only to them; 3. There could be no darkness over the entire world from the sixth to the ninth hour. The cause of the darkness is given: *The sun failing*. The darkness could not have been due to an eclipse of the sun; for an eclipse is impossible at full moon. God miraculously withheld the light of the sun from the land.

*The veil of the Temple was rent* when Jesus died, at the ninth hour. It is more probable that the inner veil, the one which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, was the one rent. It symbolized that the Old Covenant with its Priesthood and Sacrifices had come to an end.

DEATH OF JESUS (46). Matthew and Mark also state that Jesus cried out with a loud voice at the moment of death. Luke has preserved the words uttered, a confident recommendation of His soul to the Heavenly Father. It was humanly impossible for one crucified to speak with a loud voice at the moment of death; and commentators see in this cry a proof that Jesus died voluntarily and could have sustained life had He wished.

EFFECTS ON THE WITNESSES (47-49). The manner in which Jesus suffered, the darkness and rending of the

God, saying: Indeed, this was a just man. (48) And all the multitude of them that were come together at that sight, seeing the things which were done, returned, striking their breasts. (49) And all his acquaintance and the women that had followed him from Galilee stood afar off beholding these things.

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rocks (Mt.), and especially the manner in which Jesus gave up His spirit, made a deep impression upon the centurion and the soldiers. They perceived that something extraordinary had taken place and feared because of their part in the execution of Jesus. The centurion gave glory to God by professing that *This was a just man* (Mt. and Mk.: This was the Son of God). The two expressions may be taken as partly synonymous. The centurion had supervised the crucifixion of Jesus and had heard Him accused of many crimes. He declares that Jesus is innocent of all crime. He had heard Jesus accused of claiming to be the Son of God. He declares that this claim is true, naturally as a Roman would understand it.

The people were also greatly affected. When they saw what had transpired, they acknowledged that they had done wrong. They had been misled by their leaders; their sin and guilt was less, and they repented the sooner.

A third group of witnesses is mentioned. *His acquaintance* is a wide term and may include some of the apostles, who came out to witness the death of Jesus from afar. The women mentioned had followed Jesus from Galilee (cf. above, viii, 1-3). Though Luke does not mention them by name here, the next chapter provides their names: Mary Magdalen, Mary of James and Joseph, the sister of the Mother of Jesus, Joanna the wife of Chuza. Matthew and Mark mention the presence also of Salome, the mother of the sons of Zebedee; and John mentions the presence of the mother of Jesus.

(50) And behold, a man named Joseph, a counsellor, a good and just man, (51) who had not consented to their counsel and doings; a man of Arimathea, a city of Judea, who himself was looking for the Kingdom of God. (52) This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. (53) And taking it down, he wrapped it in fine linen

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*The Burial of Jesus.* XXIII, 50-56

Cf. Mt. xxvii, 57-61; Mk. xv, 42-47; Jo. xix, 38-42. Jo. alone mentions the part taken by Nicodemus.

Joseph was *a counsellor*, i.e., a member of the Great Council. But the Gospel is careful to add that he had not consented to the proceedings against Jesus. He was most likely absent; or he remained silent at the meeting which condemned Jesus to death. He was a native of *Arimathea, a city of Judea*, the exact location of which is in doubt. Three different sites have been proposed: Ramleh, on the Plain of Sharon; Rentis, north of Ramleh; Neby Samuil, six miles northwest of Jerusalem. Being a member of the Great Council, he lived in Jerusalem and had there prepared his own burial place. John adds that Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly.

Joseph went to Pilate and asked leave to remove the body of Jesus. Those condemned to crucifixion were usually left upon the cross, their removal being prohibited by Roman law. From Mark we learn that Pilate first made official inquiry into the death of Jesus. Having received the report of the centurion, he gave Joseph permission to remove the body of Jesus from the cross and bury Him. While Joseph went to Pilate, Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes for the burial (Jo.).

Joseph wrapped the body of Jesus in fine linen; and John adds that the myrrh and aloes were used according to the

and laid him in a tomb which was hewn in rock, wherein never yet had any man been laid. (54) And it was the day of the Parasceve, and the sabbath drew on. (55) And the women that were come with him from Galilee followed after and saw the tomb, and how his body was laid. (56) And returning, they prepared spices and ointments; and on the sabbath they rested, according to the commandment.

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custom of the Jews in burying their dead. One part of the usual ceremony was omitted, viz., the anointing of the body. The tomb in which Jesus was laid belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. It was in a garden, hewn out of rock and closed by a large stone rolled up against the entry. No one had yet been buried there.

*The day of the Parasceve* is the sixth day of the week, Friday. This name was given the sixth day because on that day preparation for the Sabbath day had to be made, "parasceve" meaning "preparation." *The sabbath drew on* indicates that it was late in the afternoon when Jesus was buried; for the day began with sunset. For this reason the women had not time to prepare the spices with which to anoint the body for burial.

The women who had followed Jesus from Galilee were present and saw the place where Jesus was laid. They return to their homes to prepare spices and ointments for the purpose of anointing the body of Jesus after the sabbath day. On the sabbath day itself, they remained at their homes; and thus were unaware that a guard had been placed at the tomb as is recorded in Matthew.

## Chapter XXIV

(1) And on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared. (2) And they found the stone rolled

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### *The Empty Tomb.* XXIV, 1-12

Cf. Mt. xxviii, 1-15; Mk. xvi, 1-8; Jo. xx, 1-10. None of the Gospels records the actual Resurrection of Jesus. All record the visit of several people to the tomb. They and the soldiers who guarded the tomb are witnesses that Jesus was no longer there. That He was truly risen is proven from the fact that He was seen alive.

The *first day of the week*, i.e., on Sunday, the women mentioned at the close of the preceding chapter come to the tomb, bringing the spices they had prepared. The names of some of these women are given in verse 10: Mary Magdalen, Joanna, Mary of James. Besides these, there were also others who came to the tomb. They certainly do not expect the Resurrection, for they come to anoint the body of Jesus. It is not certain that all the women mentioned in the Gospels came at the same time. There may have been different groups at different times. The Gospels are concerned solely with the fact that the women, who came to the tomb on the first Easter morning, found it empty and received the message of the Resurrection. Though the designation of time differs slightly in the Gospels, all are in accord in stating that the women came very early on the morning of the first day of the week.

Arriving at the tomb, they find the stone rolled back from the entrance and the tomb itself empty. As soon as the



back from the tomb. (3) And going in, they found not the body of the Lord Jesus. (4) And it came to pass, while they were perplexed there at, behold, two men stood by them in shining apparel. (5) And as they were afraid and bowed down their countenance to the ground, they said to them: Why seek you the living with the dead? (6) He is not here, but is risen. Remember how he spoke to you when he was in Galilee, (7) saying: The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. (8) And they remembered his words. (9) And going back from the tomb, they told these things to the eleven and to all the rest. (10) And they were Mary Magdalen, and Joanna, and Mary of James,

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state of the tomb was discovered, Mary Magdalen hastened back to tell the apostles (Jo.). The others remained and entered the tomb. While they were filled with perplexity at not finding the body of Jesus, there appeared two angels, in human form, who announced the Resurrection. Jesus is living and not dead; He must be sought among the living, for He is risen. Matthew and Mark state that the angel directed them to look upon the place where Jesus was buried in order to convince themselves that He was no longer there. They are asked to recall the prophecies which Jesus had made regarding His death and Resurrection; for these prophecies are now fulfilled.

Returning from the tomb, they told the apostles, and those with them, what they had found and what the angels had declared. The apostles, however, were slow to give credence to the women. This slowness to believe on part of the apostles, is added proof of the Resurrection; for it shows that they did not accept anything that might appear as a mere rumor or woman's fancy. The fact had to be demonstrated to them.

St. Luke briefly mentions the visit of Peter to the tomb.

and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. (11) And these words seemed to them as idle tales; and they did not believe them. (12) But Peter rising up, ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths laid by themselves; and he went away wondering in himself what was come to pass.

(13) And behold, two of them were going the same day to a town, named Emmaus, which was about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. (14) And they talked together of all these

He found the tomb empty, but the state of the tomb and the orderly manner in which the linen cloths had been laid to one side, gave evidence that the body of Jesus had not been stolen or simply removed to another tomb. St. John gives a fuller account of this visit, on which he accompanied Peter. The witnesses of the Empty Tomb of Jesus are the women, the apostles, the guards and, through these latter, the chief priests who did not deny the fact. The other proof of the Resurrection is the appearance of the Risen Lord to the apostles.

#### *The Disciples on the Way to Emmaus. XXIV, 13-35*

Mk. xvi, 12-13 records the fact that Jesus appeared to two disciples as they were going into the country. From St. Luke's detailed description of the event, some have concluded that he was one of these two disciples. But the Prologue and the life of St. Luke show that this conclusion is unwarranted.

The two mentioned here were not apostles, for they are distinguished from the apostles in verse 33. The name of one of them, as we learn from verse 18, was Cleophas. These two most probably belonged to the Seventy; and one of them seems to have had his home at Emmaus. The site of this village is somewhat doubtful. It was about *sixty furlongs*, i.e., about seven miles, from Jerusalem. The

things which had happened. (15) And it came to pass that, while they talked and reasoned together, Jesus himself drawing near, went with them. (16) But their eyes were held that they should not know him. (17) And he said to them: What are these discourses that you hold one with another as you walk, and are sad? (18) And one of them, named Cleophas, answering, said to him: Art thou the only stranger in Jerusalem and know not the things that have been done there in these days? (19) And he said to them: What things? And they said: The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in work and word be-

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village may be identified with the modern Kubeibeh which is exactly sixty furlongs northwest of Jerusalem. These two departed from Jerusalem after the women had reported the tomb empty and the appearance of the angels (vv. 22-24).

As they walked they discussed what had taken place: The life and miracles of Jesus; His death; their hopes and disappointments. Jesus joins their company, but they do not recognize Him. The wording of the text shows that their failure to recognize Jesus was due to some supernatural influence. As it was in the power of Jesus to render His body visible or invisible, so also was it in His power to effect a different image in their eyes (St. Thomas). The reason for this was that they might make known to Him their doubts that He, in turn, might instruct them and make them understand more fully what the work of the Messiah really was.

The question of Jesus regarding the subject of their conversation and the reason for their sadness surprises them. Cleophas asks whether Jesus is the only stranger in Jerusalem who is not aware of what has taken place. Jesus' question gives them an opportunity of laying their doubts before Him. They declare that Jesus had been a great prophet, recognized by God and by the people. Yet the

fore God and all the people; (20) and how our chief priests and princes delivered him to be condemned to death and crucified him. (21) But we hoped that it was he who should redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is the third day since these things were done. (22) Yea, and certain women of our company amazed us, having been early at the tomb, (23) and not finding his body, came saying that they had seen a vision of angels who say that he is alive. (24) And some of them that were with us went to the tomb and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not. (25) And he said to them: O foolish and slow of heart

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chief priests and princes had delivered Him up to be condemned to death. They next speak of their hopes and doubts. They had hoped that He would be the Redeemer, the Messiah. They added two circumstances that seemed to afford some ground for hope: certain women had been to the tomb, had found it empty, and also reported to the apostles that they had seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive; likewise certain of the apostles had also visited the tomb and found it empty. But up to the time they left Jerusalem, no one had seen Jesus. They seem to be wavering between faith and unbelief, between hope and despair.

Jesus now explains to them the true meaning of the Messianic revelation and work. Their present state, hovering between faith and unbelief, was due to not understanding the prophecies. They had looked for a Messiah who should be a great conqueror; and this idea had so overshadowed all others that they could not understand how the Messiah could suffer and die. A right understanding of the prophecies and true belief in what is written concerning the Messiah would show them that He ought, according to these prophecies, suffer and enter into glory. They had considered only the prophecies relating to the glory of the

to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken. (26) Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? (27) And beginning from Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning him.

(28) And they drew nigh to the town whither they were going; and he made as though he would go farther. (29) And they constrained him, saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening and the day is now far spent. And he went in to abide with them. (30) And it came to pass that, when he was at table with them, he took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to them. (31) And their eyes were

Messias and had overlooked those relating to His sufferings. Jesus begins with Moses, reviews and explains the prophecies concerning the Messias. The character and effect of this instruction is seen from their words as given in verse 32. It made a profound impression upon them, increased their confidence, raised their hopes and confirmed their faith.

When they arrived at Emmaus, the disciples begged Jesus to remain with them. They arrived in the village late in the afternoon, perhaps about five o'clock, for they declared that the "day is far spent"; and shortly after their arrival sat down to their evening meal. During the supper Jesus makes Himself known to them "in the breaking of bread" (v. 35). The great majority of commentators, both ancient and modern, hold that Jesus celebrated the Holy Eucharist with them. Though the disciples were not present at the Institution of the Holy Eucharist, they may have learned of it from the apostles and so recognized the act. The act of Jesus seems to have been more than a simple blessing of the food they were to eat, for the meal was in progress and the act made known to them that their guest was Jesus and no other. Finally, the Scriptures and the ancient Church designated the Holy Eucharist as "The Breaking of Bread."

opened, and they knew him; but he vanished from their sight. (32) And they said one to another: Was not our heart burning within us while he spoke in the way and opened to us the scriptures? (33) And rising up at that same hour, they went back to Jerusalem and found the eleven gathered together and those that were with them, saying: (34) The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. (35) And they told what had happened in the way and how he was known to them in the breaking of bread.

(36) Now while they were speaking these things, he stood in the midst of them, and said to them: Peace be to you (it is I; fear not). (37) But they being troubled and frightened, supposed that they saw a spirit. (38) And he said to them: Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? (39) See my hands and feet, that it is I myself;

As soon as they recognized Him, Jesus vanished from their sight. They returned immediately to Jerusalem. Here they find the eleven gathered together who declare that they have positive proof that Jesus is risen, for He has appeared to Simon. He was the first of the apostles to see the Risen Lord and the first to be brought to full belief in the Resurrection.

*Jesus Appears to the Apostles. XXIV, 36-43*

Cf. Jo. xx, 19-23. From Jo. we learn that Thomas was not present.

While the disciples were telling the apostles their experience at Emmaus, Jesus stood in the midst of them and greeted them. Again the apostles show themselves slow to believe in the Resurrection. The thought that they beheld a spirit, not Jesus. Jesus bids them to look at His hands and feet, which still bore the marks of the nails, and to touch Him. Thus are they to be convinced that Jesus has

handle, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have. (40) And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. (41) And while they yet believed not for joy and wondered, he said: Have you anything to eat? (42) And they offered him a piece of broiled fish (and a honeycomb). (43) And he took it and ate it before them.

(44) And he said to them: These are the words which I have spoken to you while I was yet with you, how all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. (45) Then he opened their minds that they might understand the scriptures. (46) And he said to them:

risen bodily from the tomb, that He who died on the cross is risen with that same body. To further convince them of the reality of His risen body, He ate before them. In this act of eating, we need only distinguish between a body that is capable of taking food and a body that has need of food. Jesus, in the risen and glorified state, had no need of food.

*Final Instructions to the Apostles. XXIV, 44-49*

Though this narrative is introduced with the words: "And He said to them," it by no means follows that these instructions were given on the day of the Resurrection. Most likely they were given on the day of the ascension.

Jesus calls their attention to the fact that all the prophecies concerning Him, the Messiah, have been fulfilled. *Moses, prophets, psalms* designate the entire Old Testament. Then He opened their minds that they might know the Scriptures. This gift was bestowed upon them that they might recognize the fulfillment of the prophecies, that they might know their duty in the salvation of the world. Their mission is to preach penance and salvation in His

Thus is it written and thus it behooved the Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead the third day; (47) and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (48) You are witnesses of these things. (49) And I send you the promise of the Father upon you; but stay in the city till you be clothed with power from on high.

(50) And he led them out until they were over against Bethany; and lifting up his hands, he blessed them. (51) And it came to pass that, while he blessed them, he departed from them, and was carried up to Heaven.

name unto all nations, and to be witnesses of His life, teaching, death and resurrection. The mission is not to begin at once. They are to remain in Jerusalem till they receive the *power from on high*, i.e., till the coming of the Holy Spirit.

#### *The Ascension.* XXIV, 50-53

Cf. Mk. xvi, 19-20; Ac. i, 4-12.

Jesus led the apostles out to the village of Bethany which is on the Mount of Olives. Jesus lifted His hands in blessing; and as He blessed them, He was taken up into Heaven. He did not suddenly disappear from their sight. The going into Heaven was visible and their gaze followed Him until a cloud hid Him from their sight (Ac.). The ascension was the last proof which Jesus gave of His divinity during His life on earth; and for this reason the apostles adored Him. It likewise showed that Jesus had triumphed over His enemies and had entered into glory; and for this reason they were filled with joy.

The Gospel closes by stating that the apostles were always in the Temple. The Acts mention that the apostles abode in the upper room. At regular hours of prayer, they



(52) And they adoring him, went back to Jerusalem with great joy. (53) And they were always in the temple, praising and blessing God.

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betook themselves to the Temple. So also after the coming of the Holy Spirit, the first Christians looked upon the Temple as a Holy Place and often resorted thither to pray.



## APPENDICES

### I. *The Census of Quirinius*

St. Luke informs us that, at the birth of Jesus, a census of the entire Roman world was being made at the direction of the Emperor and that this census was made when Quirinius was Governor of Syria (cf. Lk. ii, 1-3). This information has been the object of violent attacks by Liberals and Rationalists, who claim that St. Luke has made an historical error. "In this matter the critics are absolutely intransigent. Unwilling to listen to the explanations of the Evangelist's defenders, they regard their thesis as solidly proven and confine themselves to repeating in the same order, and often in the same words, objections that have been a hundred times refuted." We take up the four points in St. Luke's record of the census, and show that there is no historical error in them.

1. The Decree of Augustus. As stated in the commentary, this need not have been a special decree. It may refer to the policy of Caesar Augustus, by reason of which a census was taken up in Palestine at the time of Christ's birth.

It is objected that history knows nothing of such a general census during the reign of Caesar Augustus. This assertion is to be simply denied. Even though there were mention of this census nowhere else, outside of St. Luke's Gospel, this would not constitute sufficient reason for doubting the historical truth of his narrative; for many events of ancient times are accepted upon the word and testimony of one, and only one, reliable historian. And St. Luke is a reliable historian, as is sufficiently proven by the most unfriendly and unfair critical examination to which his writings have been subjected in order to bring him into contradic-

tion with profane historians. These attempts have not only failed but have even proven St. Luke's reliability as an historian.

Historians and archaeologists today admit that Augustus was a methodical administrator and that his aim was the consolidation of the empire. In accord with this aim, he was engaged in the compilation of reports and statistics. Among these documents and reports, mentioned by historians, are: (1) The *Rationes Imperii*, a periodical balance sheet of the whole Empire, published by order of the Emperor; (2) The *Breviarium Imperii*, a small book which contained, according to Tacitus, *Ann.* 1, 11, a summary of the resources of the state, the number of Romans and auxiliaries in the armies, the size of the navy, kingdoms and provinces, the tributes, customs and public expenditures (cf. Suet., *Aug.* 28, 12; Dio Cassius, 53, 33). Furthermore, an inscription in Ancyra makes known that three census were taken up during the reign of Augustus; Dio Cassius, 56, 6, states that Augustus went into Syria to set the provinces in order; and Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, 3, 3, 14, declares that the whole world was laid open to inspection by Augustus. What more evidence, or confirmation from history, is needed?

Besides the census of the Roman people, more than one census was taken up in Gaul and Spain during the reign of Augustus (cf. Livy, 134; Dio Cassius, 13, 22). The papyri, discovered in Egypt during the last century, give evidence that the census was made every fourteen years in Egypt, and it is most probable that this cycle was observed in Syria (Ramsey).

All these facts, together with the method of Augustus, makes it more than probable that Palestine was included in these periodical census. And this probability becomes certainty on the testimony of St. Luke. Looking upon him merely as a human author, can we say that he would dare to mention such a census in a work written for a prominent Roman as Theophilus, if such a census had never taken place? Of later writers we mention only St. Justin. Writing towards the middle of the second century, he refers the Roman Emperor to the census list preserved in the

archives of the Roman Government. His testimony cannot be simply brushed aside by saying that he received his information from the Gospel. For it must be remembered that St. Justin wrote an open letter to the Emperor in defense of Christianity. Would he have dared to bring forth this matter of the census, if such a census had not been made and if the census lists were not preserved in Rome?

2. The Census in Palestine. A specious objection is made against St. Luke's account on the plea that Augustus could not have ordered the census in Palestine, for it was not a part of the empire at that time. True, Palestine was not then a Roman Province; and the country was ruled by Herod the Great. But Herod was not an independent king, a "rex socius" and ruling in his own right. He obtained the kingdom by the favor of Augustus and was, in fact if not in name, a vassal of Rome. He paid tribute to Rome (Ant. 26, 10), he needed the authorization of Rome to punish his rebellious sons (Ant. 16, 9). He never coined money, which was a fundamental right of all independent kings; he did not possess the right of making his will independently of Rome; and his sons obtained permission to succeed him to the territory he bequeathed them. Surely, Herod was not an independent king. He was a "rex restitutus," a vassal ruling by favor of the Emperor and subject to him. When Augustus ordered the census, Herod complied. The census was, in fact, the opening wedge for the final reduction of Palestine to the status of a Roman Province.

3. The Mode of the Census. Objection is made to the statement of St. Luke that the census required everyone to be enrolled in his own city. We do not consider the phase of the objection which endeavors to reduce the census to an absurdity; for such a method of argumentation, put forth in the name of science, is most unscientific and unworthy of notice. In the first place, this census was taken up in the manner of the ancient Jewish census, i.e., an enrollment according to tribes and families. So there can be no objection to this point. But the objection is urged that this

was a Roman census and the Romans knew nothing of such a method. Now this is false, for the census "ad domicilium" was known and enforced by the Romans. The order for the census of 104 A.D. reads: "Seeing that the time has come for the house to house census, it is necessary to compel all those who, for any cause whatsoever, are residing outside their homes TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES, THAT THEY MAY CARRY OUT THE REGULAR ORDER OF THE CENSUS, and may also diligently attend to the cultivation of their allotments" (Milligan, *Selections from the Greek Papyri*, p. 72). The census for the year 62, which falls within the cycle of fourteen years, also required the return of each one to his own home for the enrollment (O'Rourke, *Census Quirinii*, *Ver. Dom.*, 1921, p. 209).

4. Quirinius and the Census. St. Luke connects Quirinius with the census; but they object that Quirinius did not become Governor of Syria until the year 6 A.D. We have seen in the commentary that all that is required by the text of St. Luke is that Quirinius held an office in Syria which would connect him with the census. And this can be shown by abundant proof.

The career of Quirinius is described by Tacitus, *Ann.* 3, 48. After his term of Consulship in 12 B.C., he commanded the armies in the war against the Homonades of Syria. Afterwards he became proconsul of Asia. The army at his disposal consisted of the Syrian legions; and for this reason, the conduct of the war must have been associated with the government of Syria. The Tiburtine Fragment (cf. Mommsen, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, pp. 161-168; Vigouroux, *Le Nouveau Test.*, p. 119), describes the career of a high official during the reign of Augustus. This official conquered a foreign people and ruled in Syria on two different occasions. The war, as described in the document, corresponds to the war against the Homonades; and the career suits no other official of Syria than Quirinius. It is certain that he did not rule a second time after the year 6 A.D.; and therefore this was his second term in Syria. Further proof is furnished by the inscription discovered at Antioch (cf. Ramsey, *Expos.*, 1912, p. 401 f).

The inscription pertains to the years 10-7 B.C., and shows that Quirinius was in Syria during those years.

Quirinius was in Syria about the time of Christ's birth and was in command of the Syrian armies. In this capacity he can be designated as "governor" in the wide sense, and also have charge of the census. He governed Syria a second time in 6 A.D. The first time, he may have been associated with Saturninus or may have preceded him. And thus can Tertullian and St. Justin declare, without contradicting St. Luke, that the census was taken up under Saturninus, i.e., taken when he was civil ruler or completed by him. It should be noted that this difference of detail proves that there were other sources of information regarding the census, and that these two writers made use of the sources outside the Gospel.

## II. *The Genealogies*

It is claimed that the genealogies in Matthew and Luke are contradictory, that they are mere fabrications without any historical truth in them. No objection can be made against the series of names from Adam to Abraham nor the series from Abraham to David; for the first series is given by Luke only and the second is the same in both Gospels. The difficulty arises from the series of names from David to Joseph. Excluding the names of David and Jesus, this series contains 26 names in Matthew and 41 in Luke. The former traces the line of David through Solomon to Joseph, whose father is said to be Jacob; the latter traces the descent through David's son Nathan to Joseph, whose father is said to be Heli. Each Gospel starts with a different son of David, traces the descent from father to son and ends in the same man, St. Joseph. It is said that such is impossible. We wish first to call attention to certain matters in this respect which will exclude contradiction, and then show that it was possible for two different families, carried on from father to son, to end in one man as the descendant in both lines.

The genealogies may be said to be but another proof of the Davidic descent of Jesus; for without them, this is established beyond doubt. During the life of Jesus, the people openly and without contradiction declared Jesus to be the Son of David (cf. Mt. ix, 27; xii, 23; xv, 22; xx, 30; Mk. x, 47; Lk. xviii, 38). He was declared a descendant of David by the apostles in their public discourses and writings (cf. Ac. ii, 30; xiii, 22; Rom. i, 3; Hebr. vii, 14; Apoc. v, 5; xxii, 16). The enemies of Christ and Christianity never attacked His claims on the ground that He was not a descendant of David, according to the prophecies; and Christian tradition has been unanimous on this point from the very beginning.

As to the genealogies themselves and their trustworthiness, several points should be remembered. The Jews took great care in preserving their family trees. This was necessary by reason of the Laws regarding inheritance, the succession of the Priesthood and the royal family; and it is evidenced by the many genealogies and genealogical notices in the Old Testament. Such genealogies were in existence when the Gospels were written. St. Joseph could trace his descent from David, as required by the census; the descent of certain men and women is indicated in the Gospels; St. Paul could trace his descent from the tribe of Benjamin. There are other testimonies outside the Gospels. The Jewish historian Josephus mentions the care taken, in his day, of preserving the genealogies of the priests (Con. Ap. i, 7) and declares that he found his own family tree in the public registers (Vita, 1). The Talmud, the Psalms of Solomon and other apocryphal Jewish writings, contain various lists and notices which show that this keeping of family trees, both public and private, was in vogue during and after the time of Christ. And as late as the reign of Domitian, certain Jews were still able to trace their family back to David (cf. Eusebius, H. E. 3, 12; 19, 20). There can be no doubt that genealogies existed when the Gospels were written. From these the Gospels could have received their information; and with them the Gospel genealogies could have been compared.



It must be remembered that the Gospels were public documents and open to objection. Their falsehood or unreliability, if such existed in the genealogies, could have been proven from existing documents. The Gospels would have injured their cause beyond repair had they presented fictitious genealogies; and this is especially true of the first Gospel which was written for Jewish readers. But again, no attack was made on the genealogies to disclaim the Davidic descent of Jesus. It is simply because we are no longer in possession of these documents and facts that difficulty arises. "Neither of them presents difficulties which no addition to our knowledge will solve." What has been said above excludes error and contradiction. Not being in possession of all the facts, several solutions to the difficulty have been proposed. We give the three principal solutions intended to explain how Joseph could be entered into the genealogy of two different families.

First Solution: Both Gospels give the genealogy of St. Joseph, one his natural descent from David and the other his legal descent. This view is based on the law of Dt. xxv, 5. According to this law, when brothers dwell together and one of them marries and dies without issue, the other is to marry his brother's widow and raise up seed for him. Julius Africanus was the first to propose this solution. He claimed to have proof that Jacob and Heli were half-brothers, born of the same mother but of different fathers. Each belonged to a different family, since descent passed from father to son and not from mother to son. Heli married and died childless. Jacob married his half-brother's widow; and of this marriage Joseph was born, the actual son of Jacob and the legal son of Heli. His descent from David could be traced back through two different family lines — naturally as in Matthew, legally as in Luke. Doubt is cast upon the reliability of the sources of Africanus and upon the application of the law to uterine half-brothers. But if the information of Africanus is correct and if the law applied in this case, the difficulty in the genealogies is cleared up.

Second Solution: Matthew gives the genealogy of St. Joseph,

Luke the genealogy of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This view is partly based on the fact that the Virgin Mary stands in the forefront of the narrative in the first chapters of Luke. Furthermore, she is declared a descendant of David and at the head of the genealogy it is expressly declared that the Davidic descent of Jesus does not depend upon St. Joseph. It is but natural, then, to consider the genealogy in Luke as that of the Virgin Mary. The greatest difficulty perhaps, is that the natural and easy construction of the introductory sentence to the genealogy in Luke shows that it is the genealogy of St. Joseph, who was of Heli (cf. commentary on Lk. iii, 23). It has been said that this view was first proposed by Anniius of Viterbo in the 16th century. But there are traces of this view in early writers and in the Fathers. St. Justin, Epiphanius and Irenaeus speak in such a manner as shows that they saw in the genealogy of St. Luke's Gospel the ancestry of the Virgin Mary (cf. Iren., *Adv. Haer.*, 3, 32).

Third Solution: Both Gospels give the genealogy of Joseph, but the one in St. Luke's Gospel gives the ancestry of the Virgin Mary. This solution seeks a middle way between the two preceding views and unites the two ancient traditions (cf. Holzmeister, *Zeitschrift kat. Theologie*, 1923, 184-218). Proposed by St. Augustine, it may be called the "Adoption Theory," because it supposes that St. Joseph was adopted into the family of Heli through his marriage with the Virgin Mary. Adoption strictly so-called was not provided for in the Mosaic Law; but an equivalent adoption has precedents in Jewish custom as recorded in the Old Testament. No less than six cases are there recorded in which the son-in-law is considered as the son of his wife's father and carries on his family. One is recorded in Num. xxvii, 3 f. Selo-phahad had five daughters, but no son. In order that his family line might not cease and his posterity might receive an inheritance in the Promised Land, his daughters were given husbands who continued his family and not their own. Likewise, Barzillai of Galaad had descendants through his daughters whose husbands called themselves the children of Barzillai (cf. I Esd. ii, 61;

II Esd. vii, 63). A third instance which may be pointed out is that of the family of Sesan (I Par. ii, 31, 34-35). Sesan had no sons. He gave his daughter in marriage to Jeraa; and the son born of this marriage was considered the son of Sesan and continued his family. In these and similar instances, the husband entered his wife's family and was considered the son of his father-in-law. Then, the ancestry of the wife was considered as the ancestry of the husband. It must be remembered that, according to ancient custom, a wife passed from her own family to that of the husband and the family line or descent passed from father to son, the daughters forming no link in the family tree. The exceptional cases, as cited above, were equivalent to adoption. And thus, St. Joseph the son of Jacob could have been adopted into the family of Heli by his marriage to the Blessed Virgin Mary. St. Luke then, while giving a genealogy of St. Joseph, gives the ancestry of the Virgin Mary. If she were an only daughter, as seems most probable from the Scripture narratives and ancient traditions, there was cause why the parents should make such an arrangement.

Therefore, it was possible for one man to be considered as the son of two different men and be capable of tracing his ancestry through two different families. The genealogies as given in the Gospels are not impossible and contradictory.

### III. *The Brethren of the Lord*

It is an article of Catholic faith that the Mother of Jesus remained always a virgin (Lateran Council, Can. 3; Paul IV, "Cum quorundam"). Against this doctrine most non-Catholic writers urge the objection of the "brethren of the Lord." These men are mentioned in Mt. xii, 46; xiii, 55; Mk. iii, 31; vi, 3; Lk. viii, 19; Jo. ii, 12; vii, 5; Ac. i, 14; II Cor. ix, 5; Gal. i, 19. Who were these men and in what relation did they stand to Jesus? Catholics answer that they were not children of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but relatives of hers or of St. Joseph and, for this reason,

called "brethren of the Lord." Non-Catholics, with few exceptions, declare that they were her children. They claim that "Brothers" must be children of the same parents and that these men would have been considered as such had it not been for St. Jerome. We first examine the Scriptural use of the term; then show that the term cannot be used in the non-Catholic sense; and finally show that the term was always understood as today by Catholics, even before the time of St. Jerome.

1. According to the usage of Sacred Scripture, the term "Brethren" does not necessarily or always mean children of the same parents; and in deciding the meaning of a term, we must be guided by its use in a work and at a time under discussion and not by the usage of the present day. In the Scriptures, the appellation may rest on four different titles: nature, relationship, nationality, friendship. Some examples of this usage are: Nephew (Gen. xiii, 18; xiv, 16); cousins (Lev. x, 4; I Par. xxiii, 21); relatives in general (IV Kgs. x, 13); fellow-countrymen (Gen. xix, 6; Ex. ii, 11); allies (Amos i, 9); friends (Job vi, 15); disciples (Mt. xxiv, 40); Christians and fellow-workers (I Cor. i, 1; I Pt. v, 12). With this wide use of the term "brothers," it is certainly incorrect to say that it must mean children of the same parents; and this removes the necessity which the opponents of the Catholic doctrine claim for their view.

2. While a word or term should be used in its literal meaning unless the contrary is well established, there are abundant indications in the Gospels that the term under discussion is to be used in the meaning given it by Catholics.

(a) Lk. i, 34: "How shall this be done, for I know not man?" The only explanation that fully accounts for these words is: The Blessed Virgin Mary had made up her mind to remain always a virgin, even in marriage, should circumstances ever lead her to embrace that state. And the angel's answer shows that this resolution, or vow, is to continue unchanged.

(b) When about to die, Jesus entrusted His Mother to St. John; which is more than strange if there were any other children to

care for her. Lightfoot, a non-Catholic author, considers this fact sufficient to deal the death blow to the opinion of Helvidius, renewed by non-Catholic writers (Epistle to Galatians, p. 268).

(c) In the Gospels, Jesus is known as the Son of Mary and she as the Mother of Jesus; but nowhere is she designated as the mother of the "brethren," nor are they called her children. Even Renan, who is not in sympathy with Catholic doctrine, had to admit the force of this argument: "He (Jesus) was known for a long time as the only son of a widow. In fact, such appellations ('Son of Mary') were employed when the father was dead, and when the widow had no other son" (The Gospels, p. 280).

(d) These "brethren" seem to be older than Jesus; for their attitude towards Him is hardly possible on the part of younger brothers if we take into account the position of the elder brother among the ancient Jews. But they cannot be elder brothers; they must be elder relatives who endeavor to exercise authority over Jesus.

3. Having shown that the term "brethren" need not be understood as Protestants say it must (No. 1), and that there is sufficient indication in the Gospels that it must be understood in the Catholic sense (No. 2), we now take up the third point and show the faith of early Christianity, especially that St. Jerome was not the inventor of the doctrine on the Perpetual Virginity of Mary.

When Helvidius and Jovinian, in the 4th century, proposed the modern non-Catholic view, they were immediately attacked by St. Jerome (*De Perpetua Virginitate Mariae*, ML 23, 183-206), by St. Ambrose (*De Instit. Virg.*, ML 16, 313-328), by St. Augustine (*Contr. duas Ep. Pel.*, 1, 4), by St. Chrysostom (*In Mt. v*, 6), by St. Cyril of Alexandria (*In Jo. vii*, 5), by Pope Siricius (*Ad Anysium*, MG 16, 1172), the Ambrosiaster (*In Ep. ad Gal. ii*, 19), by the Synods of Rome and Milan in 392 and the Council of Capua in 389. A united Christianity was unanimous in rejecting the view of Helvidius as impious, blasphemous, heretical, a novelty and unheard of before his time. All Christendom be-

lieved in the Perpetual Virginity of Mary, and St. Jerome and the others mentioned were voicing this faith. And this was not something new, but had been handed down by preceding generations.

Before Helvidius wrote, we have the following witness of Christian tradition. St. Epiphanius declares that "to Mary was given the name Virgin, which was never changed (Adv. Haer. 78, 6). St. Dydimus of Alexandria: "Always and at all times she remained a virgin" (De Trinitate, 3, 4). St. Ephraem, "A Virgin after the birth of Jesus" (Ench. Patr., n. 745). St. Basil: "Those who love Christ will not brook the assertion that the Mother of God ever ceased to be a virgin" (In Chr. Gen., 25). Origen declares those heretics who deny the Perpetual Virginity (MG 13, 1818), and the Oriental profession of faith proposed at Antioch to those who desired baptism, the formula of faith used at Alexandria and the anti-Priscillian formula contain the doctrine of the Perpetual Virginity. Besides these explicit statements of the 3rd and early 4th centuries, we find that from earliest times Mary was given the title "Virgin." This is found in the Apostles' Creed, the Creed of Constantinople; and is used by Sts. Justin, Aristides, Irenaeus, Abercius, etc. Now, this unqualified title and the epithet "Always Virgin," given to Mary from the earliest times, gives proof that the early Christians considered Jesus as the only son of Mary.

This faith was not due to overlooking the fact that the Gospels mention the "brethren of the Lord." St. Jerome and St. Epiphanius were not the first to explain that these men were not children of Mary. Before the time of these two Saints, writers had given the matter attention and uniformly explained that the "brethren" were not children of Mary. Besides Sts. Jerome and Epiphanius, we may mention from the 4th century: Gregory of Nyssa (In Christi Resur., or 2), Cyril of Alexandria (In Jo. vii, 5), Hilary (Com. in Mt. i, 3-4), Eusebius (H. E. 2, 1). From the 3rd century: Origen (In Mt. xiii, 55), Clement of Alexandria (Hypotyp., cf. Eus., H. E. 2, 1). In the second century: Hege-sippus (cf. Eus., H. E. 4, 22), the Evangelium Jacobi cc. 9 and

17; the Pseudo-Matthew c. 32, the *Evangelium Nativitatis Mariae* c. 8.

Thus, the use of the term "brethren" in Sacred Scripture, the data supplied by the Gospels, the faith of the Church from the very beginning, clearly shows the untenable position assumed by non-Catholic opponents of the Blessed Virgin Mary. They bring forth two stock objections, or "proofs" for their thesis which may be briefly considered here.

The first is taken from Lk. ii, 7, where Jesus is called the "first-born son." This term must be understood according to the meaning given it in the Gospel. And St. Luke (ii, 23), following Ex. xiii, 2 and Num. viii, 16, gives the definition of the term. The first-born is one before whom no other was born; and the term does not suppose that others were born after the firstborn. This is all the more certain since Ex. xxxiv, 19-20 finds its application as soon as the son was born. Though no others were yet born, he was and remained the "firstborn."

A Jewish inscription found in the cemetery of Tell el Yahoodieh gives evidence that this Scriptural signification of "firstborn" had passed into popular usage in the days of St. Luke. The inscription, which is written in Greek and dates from the reign of Augustus, laments a certain Arsinoe who died in giving birth to her firstborn son. It is evident that Arsinoe's "firstborn" was her "only" son. Therefore, neither in the Scriptures nor in popular language did "firstborn" imply or necessitate subsequent children as our opponents claim, and Catholic exegesis has again received confirmation from modern discoveries. (Cf. *Biblica*, vol. 11, 1930, pp. 373-390.)

The second objection is taken from Mt. i, 25. But the entire first chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel is wholly intent upon showing that Jesus was born of a virgin and is not concerned with the time subsequent to the birth of Christ. "St. Matthew is simply affirming in the strongest possible language that Joseph had no share in the procreation of Jesus. Bengel's laconic comment is, therefore, upon the whole justified — donec: Non sequitur, ergo post." (Harris, *Dictionary of Christ*, I, 235.)

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